

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli police are investigating the appearance of bumper stickers implicitly threatening Prime Minister Shimon Peres with death. The bumper stickers read, "Shalom Haver 2" (Goodbye Friend 2), a reference to the phrase coined by U.S. President Bill Clinton in response to the assassination of Mr. Peres' predecessor Yitzhak Rabin by a Jewish extremist. After Mr. Clinton used the phrase in an emotional White House statement following Mr. Rabin's murder and then again at the slain politician's funeral, it became a prominent pro-peace slogan in Israel. More than a million "Shalom Haver" bumper stickers were sold in the weeks following Mr. Rabin's assassination. The new sticker uses the same blue lettering on a white background, adding simply the number 2, a clear allusion to Mr. Peres. The police enquiry was opened after Labour Party Deputy Amir Peretz sent an angry letter to police chief Assaf Hefetz over what he called "the chilling sticker." "Even if the name does not appear explicitly, the threat against Peres is obvious," he said.

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King donates amplifier to RJ

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday donated an amplifier to Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national carrier, to facilitate the movement of the disabled, physically handicapped and those using wheel chairs from the RJ aircraft. The equipment facilitates the transport of passengers from the boarding gate area to aircraft parked away from aircraft ramps, without having to use ladders. The new equipment represents a new addition to the services provided by the RJ.

Iraq lashes out at Arab League head

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq on Tuesday accused Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdol Meguid of refusing to visit the country unless he received bribes. "Abdul Meguid has not only failed to fulfill his commitments and acted outside Arab League authority, but adopted the most negative aspect of American and Kuwaiti behaviour toward Iraq," the official Al Jumhuriyah daily said. Salah Al Mokhtar, the newspaper's editor in chief, was commenting on an Arab newspaper interview in which Dr. Abdul Meguid was quoted as saying he would visit Iraq if there was a good reason to. Mr. Mokhtar, who was assistant secretary general for information at the league during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, said: "Abdul Meguid will not profit from his visit to Iraq because Baghdad doesn't offer privileges or bribes to buy the support" of the Arab League.

Hizbollah is 'able to develop' Katyusha

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's Hizbollah can develop Soviet-made Katyusha rockets it uses in bombing northern Israel, the militant group's deputy chief said in remarks printed on Tuesday. "Hizbollah has become able to develop the Katyusha weapon like to one in the world can develop it," Sheikh Na'im Qassem said on Monday at a rally in East Lebanon. His remarks were carried by Beirut newspapers on Tuesday.

Chubais resigns

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin accepted Tuesday the resignation of First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais. Interfax news agency reported. But Mr. Chubais himself said later Tuesday Mr. Yeltsin had not yet accepted his resignation. "The president has not accepted my resignation but I hope he will do so soon," the minister was quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency as saying. Mr. Chubais, who has presided over Russia's controversial privatisation programme for more than four years, resigned earlier Tuesday after discussing his future in the government with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. He becomes the second minister of the beleaguered Russian government to resign this month after Andrei Kozirev resigned as foreign minister on Jan. 5.

Mubarak meets ousted Qatari emir

CAIRO (AFP) — President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday greeted at Cairo airport the deposed ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani. The former emir, who was overthrown by his son in a bloodless coup last June, arrived on board his personal plane for a private three-day visit. Sheikh Khalifa ended this week a tour of Gulf Arab states to seek backing for his campaign to win back power in Qatar.

Jordan, Israel sign transport agreement

Accord removes major hurdle in efforts to boost trade and tourism

By Amy Henderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

TIBERIAS, Israel — Jordan and Israel on Tuesday signed a long-awaited transportation agreement, the acclaimed "linchpin" of agreements previously signed between the two countries. The accord is expected to significantly boost trade and tourism between the two countries, and "bring the two peoples together," said Transport Minister Samir Kassar.

"We are convinced," said Mr. Kassar during the signing ceremony at Tiberias, "that our achievements will enhance our human interaction at all levels."

Mr. Kassar signed the accord along with his Israeli counterpart Yisrael Kessar at Beit Gabrielle, a conference centre on the shores of Lake Tiberias where His Majesty King Hussein and the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin exchanged the documents of ratification of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty more than a year ago.

Also among the Jordanian delegation were Ambassador to Israel Marwan Muasher, head of the Civil Aviation Authority Ahmad Jweib, head of the committee supervising the implementation of the peace treaty Hani Mulki and member of the negotiating team Dureid Mahasneh.

Also on Tuesday, Mr. Jweib

and his Israeli counterpart Menachem Shalom signed an annex on civil aviation.

"Our bilateral agreement has paved the road for the national priorities in our sector to be streamlined along new regional realities," Mr. Kassar said.

"Jordan's historic role as a transit country that has provided transportation corridors between East and West, North and South, is bound to be enhanced with the new spirit of regional and economic cooperation."

To date, trade and tourism has been significantly hindered by the lack of a transport agreement. Under the agreement signed Tuesday Jordanian trucks transporting goods will be allowed to pass at the Wadi Araba and Sheikh Hossein crossings, thereby granting access to Israel's Mediterranean Sea ports.

Also under the provisions of the agreement, Jordanian trucks will be allowed to transport goods to the Palestinian autonomous territories via the King Hussein Bridge. After crossing, goods will be reloaded onto Palestinian vehicles destined for self-rule areas.

Tourist buses and private vehicles with an international licence will also be allowed to cross. The accord stipulates that 450 private cars from each country will be allowed

to cross weekly.

The accord, long delayed due to a snag in "technical details and definitions" of civil aviation, also allows for the creation of a five times weekly air taxi service between Amman and Tel Aviv will reduce the often lengthy hassle of crossing at land borders from a several hours ordeal to a 14-minute flight. It dictates mutual use of the Aqaba airport, now undergoing a feasibility study and slated for major expansion in the coming few years.

The accord also calls for the creation of six daily bus routes between the two countries — Aqaba-Eilat, Tel Aviv-Amman, Haifa-Amman, Haifa-Irbid, Nazareth-Amman and Nazareth-Irbid.

As parties to the multi-lateral peace talks, the two countries are also required by the accord to develop an infrastructure for an eventual railway system for the Middle East. Such a line between Jordan and Israel would include Haifa, Irbid and Ma'raq.

The signing of the transport accord also signals the beginning of the last round of cooperation agreements to be signed in fulfillment of the peace treaty. The four remaining accords — science and culture, maritime borders, Aqaba-Eilat and telecommunications — are to be signed Thursday in Aqaba.



Transport Minister Samir Kassar and his Israeli counterpart Yisrael Kessar on Tuesday exchange copies of the Jordanian-Israeli transport agreement that they signed at a ceremony held at Tiberias (Photo by Youssef Allan)

Gore sees Israel-Syria breakthrough this year

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Vice-President Al Gore said on Tuesday Israel and Syria could make peace this year.

"I am convinced that with courage, creativity and commitment we can achieve a breakthrough this year," Mr. Gore told reporters after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher secured an agreement from Israel and Syria during a shuttle mission last week to expand their peace talks conducted in the United States. He said the talks were at a critical stage.

Mr. Gore arrived in Israel on Monday for what U.S. officials termed a condolence call following a November assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

He was due to meet later on Tuesday with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat.

Syria said Tuesday that peace was still possible with Israel before the end of this year if the Jewish state would only agree to hand back the Golan Heights.

"The peace equation is

simple and clear: the exchange of peace for land, without undermining the sovereignty or integrity of this land now or in the future," the newspaper of the ruling Baath Party, Al Baath, said.

"When Israel promises to respect this equation, peace will become unavoidable and could be reached in record time before the end of this year."

Syria's key demand in its on-off peace talks with Israel is the return of the Golan Heights.

Israel, however, wants Syria to agree first to a "warm" peace with economic ties and open borders before it commits itself to a total pull-out from the Golan.

Al Baath said Israel had still not signalled its intention to exchange land for peace "despite the good intentions of Israeli leaders and their expressed desire to progress in peace talks."

The newspaper said the new talks would provide "a good chance to break the deadlock" in the peace process.

The comments marked a

return to optimism from Syria, which had hardened its stance against Israel over the weekend by accusing its leaders of negotiating in bad faith.

Mr. Gore on Tuesday also renewed his country's commitment to the security of Israel as it works for peace with the Arabs.

"My first purpose in coming was to reaffirm America's iron-clad commitment to Israel's security and well-being as Israel takes risks for peace," he said.

"This is unshakeable commitment that will always endure," said Mr. Gore.

"Although time is short, I am convinced we can achieve a breakthrough this year," he told a press conference, referring to the Israeli-Syrian track of the Middle East peace process.

"I pledge to you that we will do everything we possibly can to ensure that this comprehensive peace takes place."

Mr. Gore on Monday paid his condolences to Mr. Rabin's widow Leah.

(Continued on page 7)

Iraq said ready to discuss limited oil sales

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraq was reported ready to discuss the Security Council's resolution allowing limited oil sales in exchange for humanitarian goods, non-aligned diplomats said on Tuesday.

Iraq's U.N. ambassador, Nizier Hamdoun, told non-aligned members of the council that Baghdad was "ready to initiate negotiations with Secretary-General Ghali" on implementing the resolution, according to one envoy at the meeting.

It was not immediately clear whether Iraq had officially notified Dr. Ghali of its plans, but other council members said they were aware of the initiative.

According to non-aligned diplomats, Iraq was prepared to enter negotiations without preconditions on the council's Resolution 986, which allows \$2 billion in oil sales over six months to be used for humanitarian goods.

Iraq has been under crippling sanctions since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990 and needs more to feed its people. So far Baghdad has turned down the limited oil sales deal, saying it violates its sovereignty.

Negotiations several years ago on a similar limited oil sales deal fell through after months of talks.

Meanwhile Iraq announced a wide-ranging programme of festivities to mark the fifth anniversary of "the mother of all battles," its term for the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

The official press agency INA said President Saddam Hussein would deliver "a comprehensive, national and intellectual speech on Wednesday on the anniversary of the vicious 30-state military aggression against Iraq."

Iraq's youth federation will organise a march in which it said tens of thousands of Iraqi youths were to take part.

The procession was to start at 2:30 a.m. on Wednesday (2330 GMT on Tuesday) when the U.S. and allies unleashed their missiles and bombs on Baghdad five years ago to force Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

There will be calls of "Allahu Akbar" from mosque minarets throughout the country and church bells will resound over Baghdad to mark the occasion, newspapers said.

The Ministry of Culture and Information has published a glossy booklet of 22 pages containing programmes by various ministries to celebrate the war anniversary.

The programme includes seminars, art exhibitions, music concerts and poetry festivals.

Several songs have been composed in memory of the fifth anniversary of the war over the Gulf war five years ago, but he is fighting deepening financial troubles caused by the U.N. sanctions.

George Bush lost the 1992 U.S. elections, France's Francois Mitterrand died after leaving office, Russia's Mikhail Gorbachev has left the scene and Saudi Arabia's ailing King Fahd has handed over power to Crown Prince Abdullah.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who rallied to Mr. Bush's call to send allied troops to the Gulf, left office before the war started early on Jan. 17, 1991, but her successor John Major remains in power.

"The United States bet on

(Continued on page 7)

Russian troops struggle to free Chechen-held hostages

OUTSIDE PEROVOMAISSKAYA, Russia (AFP) — Russian forces struggled to free dozens of hostages in the Daghestani border village of Perovomaiskaya Tuesday as heavily armed Chechen rebels holding them captive battled on.

As night fell over the village blanketed in mist, flames shot skywards from blazing buildings and automatic weapons and cannon fire could still be heard.

Russian special forces were battling to flush out the rebels, who were well dug in and still putting up fierce resistance.

Helicopter gunships which fired rockets at the rebels during the day continued flying over the village and flares lit up the night sky, an AFP correspondent at the scene reported.

Russian Interior Ministry officials told ITAR-TASS news agency that nearly all the rebels had been pushed back into the centre of the village, where they were holding the mosque and school and several nearby buildings.

The Russian forces, who began a massive assault on the rebels Monday, urged the separatists to surrender during a brief lull around midday Tuesday, but the appeal was rejected.

Artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships bombarded the village from early Monday after the expiry of a final ultimatum to the rebels to give up their hostages.

Federal Security Services

Boat hijacked

CHECHEN REBELS hijacked a boat carrying 120 passengers and 45 crew in the Turkish port of Trabzon on Tuesday and threatened to kill Russians aboard, Turkey's Anatolian news agency said.

"They said they would kill a Russian citizen every ten minutes if the captain did not come," Anatolian said, adding that the vessel was scheduled to travel to the Russian port of Sochi.

(FSB) spokesman Alexander Mikhailov said 26 hostages had been freed since the assault began on the rebels led by Salman Raduyev, who are fighting for independence from Russia.

The first group of freed hostages returned to the Daghestani border town of Kizlyar Tuesday. Interfax news agency reported. They included five women and three children.

Earlier military officials said two journalists detained by Russian forces were also being evacuated in Kizlyar, which the rebels stormed a week ago triggering the hostage crisis.

The journalists working for the British television company WTN were in Perovomaiskaya when the assault began.

The rebels, numbering around 150, were holding more than 100 hostages in Perovomaiskaya before the

assault, most of them civilians brought from Kizlyar in a bus convoy last Wednesday.

Chechen separatists have been at war with Russian forces since Moscow poured troops into Chechnya in December 1994 to crush an independence bid led by Dzhokhar Dudaev.

Helicopters regularly ferried wounded Russian soldiers Tuesday to a field hospital on the edge of Sovetskoye, a village near Perovomaiskaya.

Mr. Mikhailov said the federal forces' aim was not "to go fast" in the assault on the rebels.

Earlier FSB spokesman Alexander Zdanovich told ITAR-TASS that the rebels had dug deep trenches between the houses in Perovomaiskaya and were "moving quickly from place to place."

Mr. Zdanovich, quoting an FSB official at the scene, said that "the delay in the special forces' advance is due only to the effort to preserve the lives of as many hostages as possible," and federal forces were mainly attacking the rebels with sniper fire.

The remaining hostages were believed to be held in the mosque and school, ITAR-TASS said.

The FSB said six Russian troops had been killed in the battle.

The Russian dead included a senior Interior Ministry officer, Colonel Andrei Kresyaninov, Interfax reported.

(Continued on page 7)

Iran invites UAE to discuss islands dispute in Tehran

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati on Tuesday invited his counterpart from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to visit Tehran in a bid to settle their dispute over three Gulf islands.

"We are certain we can reach a positive result through negotiations and we will not get involved in a war with our neighbours," Mr. Velayati told reporters during a visit to Kuwait.

"The misunderstanding with the United Arab Emirates can only be resolved through bilateral negotiations and I invited the (UAE) foreign minister to travel to Tehran to pursue the talks," Mr. Velayati said.

Iran and the UAE both claim sovereignty over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, which the Shah of Iran occupied in 1971 when the UAE gained independence.

Experts from the two countries held negotiations in Qatar in November but without results. Iran asked the UAE then to move the negotiations to Tehran.

The UAE wants to submit the dispute to the International Court of Justice but Iran refuses and says it will never abandon sovereignty over the islands at the entrance to the Gulf.

Iran-Kuwait ties have "strengthened in the last two years" and are "constantly improving," Mr. Velayati said after meeting the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, Crown Prince Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and Foreign Minister Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

"The strengthening of ties between Iran and Kuwait will undoubtedly have a positive influence on relations throughout the Gulf region," he said.

Saudi dissident lodges appeal against expulsion

LONDON (R) — A Saudi dissident ordered out of Britain to protect trade deals with Riyadh has appealed against his deportation order and the case should be heard within two weeks, British officials said on Tuesday.

Home Office (interior ministry) officials said Mohammad Masari, who has waged a publicity campaign against the Saudi royal family since entering Britain last year, had lodged appeal papers contesting the decision earlier this month to expel him to the Caribbean island of Dominica.

The government has admitted that it decided to expel Masari after Saudi Arabia made clear it could pull out of weapons contracts with Britain unless he was removed.

Mr. Masari has accused the Saudi royal family of corruption and calling for a peaceful transition to stricter Islamic rule.

He had been ordered to report to Gatwick Airport Jan. 19. The decision to expel him enraged human rights groups and opposition parties who accused the government of putting commercial interests above the rights of free speech.

But Prime Minister John Major said Mr. Masari had "used his hospitality in this country to wage a campaign

to try to bring down the Saudi Arabian regime."

The Home Office said Mr. Masari's case would be held in public before an independent adjudicator at an immigration appeals hearing before the end of January.

But a final decision could take months if appeals are allowed to higher courts.

"It could go all the way up to the House of Lords. Some cases do," a Home Office official said. The House of Lords is Britain's unelected upper house of parliament and also acts as the country's highest court.

Meanwhile, supporters of Mr. Masari said they were planning to apply for a television licence in Britain to broadcast programmes into Saudi Arabia.

The Campaign for the Defence of Legitimate Rights, which was founded by Mr. Masari, had no details of the kinds of programme it hoped to beam into Saudi Arabia via satellite.

But Britain's Independent Television Commission, which must approve licence requests, said any programmes would have to conform to British codes of practice.

"Any news or current affairs programmes would have to be impartial. They cannot be used for propaganda," a spokesman told Reuters.

Turkey wants U.S. explanation of position on Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey has asked the United States to explain its official position on the Kurdish problem following a "60 Minutes" broadcast in which two U.S. administration officials severely criticised Ankara's Kurdish policy, a foreign ministry official said Tuesday.

The deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in Ankara (Frank Riccardone) has been summoned to the Foreign Ministry and asked to bring an explanation into the situation, Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Onur Oymen told a news conference here.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs John Kornblum appeared on the U.S. television network CBS's "60 Minutes" programme on Sunday.

Mr. Shattuck charged in the programme that the Turkish government had murdered civilians, and Mr. Kornblum likened Turkey with Iraq.

Presenter Ed Bradley asked Mr. Shattuck, "Does the Turkish government murder civilians?" The U.S. official replied, "Right. People are caught tragically in the middle of this (the struggle between the government and Kurdish rebels)."

And Mr. Kornblum, when asked "How does the destruction of Kurdish villages in Turkey differ from the destruction of Kurdish villages across the border in Iraq by Saddam Hussein?" replied: "If you are in the village, there is no difference whatsoever."

Mr. Oymen said the "official U.S. stance" was either the one "traditionally known" or a stance reflected by the remarks of Mr. Shattuck and Mr. Kornblum on "60 Minutes."

"We'd like to know if there's a change in the traditional U.S. approach or not," Mr. Oymen said.

In the past, Washington has supported Turkey's right to defend its territorial integrity against the separatist Kurdish insurgency launched 12 years ago. However, the U.S. administration has also urged Ankara to settle the Kurdish question through political rather than military means.

More than 20,000 people have been killed in southeastern Turkey since 1984 when the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) launched its armed campaign for a homeland in the region.

The summoning of a U.S. diplomat to the Turkish Foreign Ministry is a rare event in the traditionally close relations between the two NATO allies.

Mr. Oymen also said Turkey would take legal action against CBS for broadcasting the programme, which was apparently aimed at defaming Turkey and its army.

He complained that several other Western media organisations had also recently published "unfounded stories aimed at hurting Turkey's prestige."

Turkey said Monday that it would sue the British-owned weekly The European for publishing pictures, which it said were fake, showing men in Turkish army uniforms holding the severed heads allegedly of Kurdish rebels.

Disillusioned Palestinians hesitate to vote

By Wafa Amr
Reuters

FAWWAR REFUGEE CAMP, West Bank — Nothing about the Palestinian election campaign could interest five men in Fawwar Camp who killed time playing cards.

"Elections? Why should we care about elections?" asked one of them, Ahmad Anati, 67, who was angered by the interruption.

The air smelled of sewage flowing in the muddy streets of the squalid West Bank camp of concrete houses with metal roofs.

"Elections are good for those who benefit from it, not for us refugees," he said.

The Jan. 20 elections will be the first since Israel's handover to Palestinian self-rule of the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank under peace deals with the PLO starting with a breakthrough accord in 1993.

Nearly 700 candidates are standing for 88 seats on the Palestinian council. But many residents of the refugee camps in self-rule areas are sceptical about elections they believe will do little to improve their lives.

"Nobody cares about us or our problems," Mr. Anati said. "Since 1948 we have been abandoned, so why should we be interested in 'their' elections now?"

Mr. Anati is one of 5,000 Palestinians in Fawwar Refugee Camp who fled their villages and towns in what is now Israel during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. He hopes one day to return.

"I believe out of 100 refugees, only five would actually go to the ballot boxes," Mr. Anati said.

Some residents of the 28 refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip accuse PLO head Yasser Arafat of abandoning them when, under terms of the peace deal, he agreed to postpone negotiations on the issue of refugees until final-status talks with Israel begin in May 1996.

Many had hoped the peace deal would give them freedom of movement and improve living conditions.

"We were happy. We built homes here. Yasser Arafat signed the peace treaty because we knew he gave up 1948 Palestinian lands, our lands, to Israel, in return for peace," said Youssef Issa, 70. "We thought peace meant Israeli soldiers would leave us alone."

"Look at us, imprisoned in this camp. If we try to leave, we are prevented by



A Palestinian street vendor dishes out fast-food Tuesday as people pass by a bank which is covered in posters promoting various Palestinian candidates standing for elections in the national elections to be held Jan. 20 (Reuters photo)

Operating instructions for the elections

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — A million Palestinians go to the polls Saturday to elect a president and 88-member self-rule council in the first general elections ever held in the Palestinian territories.

Here are details of the voting procedures: — According to the Central Election Commission, 1,013,235 Palestinians aged 18 or over have registered to vote in the election in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem. Forty-nine per cent of the registered voters are women.

— Election to the Palestinian Council is by a first-past-the-post majority system. A total of 672 candidates, including 28 women, are running in 16 districts for the 88 seats on the council.

— Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat, 67, and Samiha Khalil, a 72-year-old grandmother and leftwing activist, are the only candidates for the post of executive president.

— Most candidates are running as independents, although many of these are considered close to Mr. Arafat's Fatah movement. Other independents are aligned with the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), the main Palestinian opposition group which is officially boycotting the polls.

— The main parties presenting candidates include Fatah and several affiliated groupings, the Palestinian People's Party (formerly Communist Party), the Fida party led by ousted Palestinian Authority Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo, and the National Democratic Coalition of Haidar Abdul Shafi, the former chief PLO peace nego-

tiator. — Six seats are reserved for Christians — two in Jerusalem, two in Bethlehem and one each in Ramallah and Gaza City — and one seat is set aside in Nablus for the Samaritan minority.

— Voting begins at 7:00 a.m. (0500 GMT) on Saturday in 1,700 polling stations and closes at 7:00 p.m. (1700 GMT). Voters will place a red ballot paper in a red box to choose the president and a white ballot paper in a white box to select council members.

— In Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem, only 5,000 of the 49,000 voters registered by the election commission will be permitted to vote within the city limits, with the rest voting at polling stations in the Palestinian territories. Voting in the city will take place in five post offices and all ballot papers will be taken to West Bank election headquarters in Ramallah for counting.

— Other ballots will be counted by hand in each polling station with election workers to tally the presidential vote first. Initial presidential results are expected around 10:30 a.m. (2030 GMT), according to election commission officials.

Results from smaller constituencies like Jericho on the West Bank are expected to begin coming in around 2:00 a.m. and initial results from most areas are expected around dawn. Full results are due to be announced later Sunday.

— About 1,000 international observers will monitor the poll under the coordination of the largest delegation, from the European Union.

Candidate in wheelchair seeks place on council

NABLUS (AFP) — Imad Labadeh, crippled by an Israeli bullet during the intifada, wheeled his way through the streets of the West Bank's largest city Tuesday rallying support for his candidacy to the Palestinian self-rule council.

"The message is we are not disabled, we can do everything in terms of building our future in our community," said Mr. Labadeh, 33, as he waved a Palestinian flag at the head of a march of about 200 people, including eight others in wheelchairs.

"The bullets that hand-

icapped me will not prevent me from reaching the council," read a banner carried by his supporters.

Mr. Labadeh is running as an independent in Saturday's elections, with the endorsement of the General Union for the Palestinian Disabled.

He campaigns for about 10 hours a day in villages and refugee camps around Nablus, where he helps direct a sports club and plays basketball and table tennis from his wheelchair.

Mr. Labadeh was wounded in the back by a bullet fired by an Israeli soldier in July 1993 during

a demonstration in Nablus just two months before Israel and Yasser Arafat's PLO signed a blueprint for Palestinian self-rule which led to the end of the intifada, or uprising, launched in 1987.

"At the time I was paralysed completely, but I have a strong spirit," he said.

About 12,000 Palestinians were physically disabled during the seven-year uprising, according to union official Omayma Abu Shusha. In all, he said, more than 85,000 people in the territories suffer from

physical or mental handicaps or blindness.

Mr. Labadeh is convinced the uprising could mark the beginning of a shift away from traditionally negative views of the disabled.

"Arab society views the handicapped negatively, focusing on his disability and not his ability. The wounded of the intifada, who were disabled in the struggle for national rights, are causing a more positive view," he said.

Basic rehabilitation, health care, the right to education, and the right to

work are all challenges facing the disabled, he said.

Mr. Labadeh refrains from criticising the Palestinian Authority's stance, saying: "It depends on the disabled themselves, if they react positively and push for their rights or not."

While backing the end of the Palestinian Authority to the West Bank, Mr. Labadeh took issue with for not gaining concessions from Israel on Jerusalem, return of refugees and statehood.

"This is a small part of the Palestinian dream, its realisation," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 The Filastines
14:30 Speed Racer
15:00 Bill Nye The Science Guy
15:30 Amazing Stories
16:00 Voyagers
17:00 Sophie et Virginie
17:30 Serie — Des Heros Ordinaires
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Anything For A Laugh
20:00 The Nature of Things
20:25 Hawaii Five — O
21:10 Documentary — Girl Friday
22:00 News in English
22:25 Frim
23:45 Drama — Airwolf
23:50 The Silk Road
00:30 Second Thoughts

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 Fajr
06:31 Sunrise (Sunrise) Daba
11:45 Dhuhr
14:35 Asr
16:59 Maghreb
18:29 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 510740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590,
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 674440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrence Church Tel. 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773251.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Armenian International Church Tel. 625256.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 804323.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A depression will affect the Kingdom today. Temperatures will drop significantly with rain falling over all regions, and skies becoming cloudy. Snow is expected to fall over Sharrah and Ajloun and winds becoming westerly moderate to active.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp. Amman 3/8, Aqaba 9/16, Dead Sea 2/10, Jordan Valley 8/15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 18, Humidity readings: Amman 63 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197, Dr. Jamal Jbara 847351, Dr. Adnan Zaghoul 898140, Dr. Youssef Al Fajh 750104, Firas pharmacy 651912, Ferdows pharmacy 778336, Al Asena pharmacy 637053, Nairoukh pharmacy 623472, Al Salama pharmacy 636730, Yacoub pharmacy 644945, Shmeisani pharmacy 637680, Nairoukh pharmacy 623672, Najib pharmacy 847632.

AMMAN: Dr. Ahmad Qanu 281741, Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA: Dr. Abdul Karim Khushnash 983023, Khalifeh pharmacy 985417.

EMERGENCIES: Food Control Centre 637111, Civil Defence Department 661111, Civil Defence Immediate 630241, Civil Defence Emergency 199, Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777, Fire Brigade 671001, Blood Bank 775121, Highway Police 843402, Traffic Police 856390, Public Security Department 630351, Hotel Complaints 605800, Price Complaints 661176.

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467, Amman Municipality 787111, Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121, Overseas Calls 010230, Central Amman Telephone 623101, Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101, Radio Jordan 773111, Jordan Television 774111, Water Authority 680100, Jordan Electricity Authority 815613.

Electric Power Company 636381.

RU Flight Information 08-53200, Queen Alia Int'l Airport 08-53200.

HOSPITALS: AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 818131/32, Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 8442816, Akleh Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2, Jabbal Amman Maternity 642362, Malhas, J. Amman 636140, Palestine, Shmeisani 607071, Shmeisani Hospital 669131, University Hospital 645845, Al-Musker Hospital 667271/9, The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37, Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6, Italian, Al-Muhajir 77101/3, Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26, Army, Marka 891611/15, Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50, Amal Hospital 674155, The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199, ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323, Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560, Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732, Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (09)90990.

REBDO: Princess Basma Hospital (02)225555, Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725, Ibn Al-Nafis Hospital (02)247100.

AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111.

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:40 Tunis (add) (RJ)

06:50 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

06:50 Jeddah (RJ)

06:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

06:55 Larnaca (RJ)

07:00 Damascus (RJ)

12:15 Aqaba (RJ)

14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

16:40 Istanbul (RJ)

17:55 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)

18:25 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)

18:45 Rome (RJ)

18:10 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

18:25 Paris, Brussels (RJ)

22:45 London, Berlin (RJ)

23:20 Aqaba (RJ)

Beirut (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:50 Cairo (MS)

10:30 Jeddah (SV)

12:15 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)

14:20 Algiers (AH)

20:00 Sanaa (YV)

20:10 Beirut (ME)

22:45 Larnaca (CY)

22:45 Athens, Beirut (OA)

23:25 Amsterdam (KL)

23:59 London (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:45 Rome (RJ)

10:00 Aqaba (RJ)

10:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

10:35 Berlin, London (RJ)

11:25 Istanbul (RJ)

11:25 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

19:35 Beirut (RJ)

19:45 Colombo (RJ)

20:45 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)

20:10 Cairo (RJ)

20:25 New Delhi (RJ)

20:25 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)

21:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

6250 Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:45 Beirut (ME)

09:15 London (MS)

10:40 Cairo (MS)

12:00 Jeddah (SV)

13:25 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)

15:20 Sharjah (AH)

21:40 Sanaa (YV)

22:50 Larnaca (CY)

06:25 Amsterdam (C)

07:00 Athens (C)

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Queen Noor announces 5 scholarships for Jordanian students to United World Colleges

By Alia Toukan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday announced that five scholarships to the United World Colleges (UWC) will be available to Jordanian students during the next academic year.

At a press conference at Al Ma'wa Palace, Queen Noor also announced the formation of the new Jordanian National Committee of the UWC, which will be chaired by Mohammad Maqusi, vice president of academic affairs at the University of Jordan.

Queen Noor, who became president of the UWC in November last year, said the scholarships allocated to Jordanian students are in UWC colleges in Italy, the U.S., Canada, and Norway. The college in Norway, she said, will also pay for travel costs and personal expenses. A half scholarship will also be offered in

Wales, said the Queen, adding that funds raised locally will cover the remaining cost of study.

A seat has also been reserved for a Jordanian student at the Waterford Kamhlaba UWC of Southern Africa. But the student will have to cover the cost of his/her study there due to the unavailability of funds, said Mr. David Sutcliffe, executive director of the UWC.

Her Majesty said that eligible candidates for the scholarship should be "bright, motivated (and) must have a good command of English." They should be "exceptional students with strong marks and (have) an interest in learning about other cultures," said the Queen, adding that the National Committee is looking "for young Jordanians that can be ambassadors of this country."

Her Majesty also stressed the need to find students

from different sectors of society who are representative of the entire Kingdom.

Mr. Mark Hoffman, chairman of the UWC, said during the conference that most of the students who attend UWC return to their countries with "a sense of world community."

The UWC Jordanian National Committee was initially founded by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath in 1984. The new committee, which select the successful candidates for the scholarships, is an extension of the older one. Queen Noor said.

The selection process is based on an interview and written examinations in English and Arabic, history, science and mathematics. Eligible candidates must also be in the 10th or 11th grade.

The UWC, which will hold its next regional conference in Jordan in April, is an international educational programme for stu-

dents between the ages of 16 and 19. The study programme includes the International Baccalaureate, with the exception of the Simon Bolivar College in Venezuela, which offers a 3-year diploma course in farm management and rural development. Waterford Kamhlaba of Southern Africa is the only UWC that offers a full high school education for students aged 11-19 years.

Since 1984, forty-five students from Jordan have been sent on scholarships to colleges in the UWC programme.

The UWC consists of nine colleges set up in the U.K., Hong Kong, Norway, Venezuela, Canada, Singapore, Italy, the U.S., and Swaziland.

Asked about the likelihood of establishing a college in Jordan, Queen Noor said that "it is time to have a facility in the Middle East," adding that many people think Jordan would



be the ideal country to host the college. She added that the idea is under consideration.

About 3,200 students from more than 100 countries are currently enrolled at the UWC.

The deadline for applying for the scholarships is the end of April. Interested students must contact the Ministry of Education or the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation for an application form.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday plants a tree at the Martyr's Monument during the Armed Forces celebrations of Arbor Day (Photo by Yousef 'Allan)

Prince Hassan, Princess Sarvath attend army Arbor Day celebrations

AMMAN (Petra) — Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath Tuesday attended the Jordanian Armed Forces celebrations of Arbor Day at the Martyr's Monument.

Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath, who returned to Amman from a trip to Europe late Monday evening, were accompanied by Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif and Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi as well as senior army officers and officials. Prince Hassan, Princess Sarvath and other officials planted trees at the site, which is undergoing renovation by the armed forces.

The renovation project, which is being undertaken upon directives of Prince Hassan, consists of three stages. But only the first has been completed, said Major General Mohammad Hweyyan, acting chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

Maj Gen Hweyyan said that the first stage entailed

renovation work at the area around the tree of life, where the names of the army martyrs are inscribed on a black granite board.

He said that the second and third stages will entail building of external gardens and reorganising the interior of the monument, which displays items and photographs depicting the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces since the founding of the Kingdom.

Noting that the renovation project is undertaken by the armed forces, Maj Gen. Hweyyan voiced appreciation for Jordanian organisations which extended assistance towards the implementation of the project. He said that the armed forces will pursue its contributions towards the effort to green the Kingdom.

Relatives of the army martyrs attended the celebrations.

Swiss grant to finance Jordan Valley hospital

AMMAN (Petra) — The Swiss government will grant Jordan JD 1 million to convert the M'addi Health Centre in the Jordan Valley into a 30-bed hospital with the capability for expansion to 100 beds, according to an agreement signed Monday.

The grant will be released in four parts: JD 150,000, JD 200,000, JD 200,000, JD 200,000 and JD 250,000, which will finance the construction of the building and the supply of non-medical equipment.

The Ministry of Health will provide JD 1.5 million for the purchase and installation of medical equip-

ment and furniture, and will cover operation and maintenance services, according to the agreement signed by Swiss Ambassador Gian Federico Pedotti and Minister of Health Aref Bataineh.

Dr. Bataineh said work on the project will take 24 months to complete, adding that the hospital is badly needed to provide medical care to a large sector of the Jordan Valley population. He said the ministry has prepared the designs for the planned hospital and that related tenders will be awarded to construction firms on Jan 23.

Hepatitis cases significantly reduced

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Health's Child Immunisation Programme, which started last July, has significantly brought down the numbers of hepatitis cases in the country, Health Minister Aref Bataineh said Tuesday.

Dr. Bataineh said that cases of hepatitis, a viral disease, dropped last year to 555, down from 1,556 in 1994 and 1,518 in 1993. The minister's statement came in response to earlier reports on the spread of the disease in Jordan.

The drop, he said, is the result of preventive mea-

sures taken by the ministry as well as public awareness campaigns on ways to avoid infection.

According to the minister, the campaign targeted infants, as they are most susceptible to contracting the disease.

He added that Jordan is one of the few countries in the Middle East to introduce such an immunisation programme.

The treatment for hepatitis usually lasts one to two weeks, and in most cases the patient totally recovers. In very few cases, Dr. Bataineh said, the disease

could be fatal.

Like typhoid, cholera and diarrhoea, hepatitis can be avoided through proper hygiene and avoiding contaminated foods and beverages.

Referring to hepatitis B, the minister said it is transmitted through blood transfusion, contaminated syringes or sexual intercourse.

He warned that children infected with the disease should be treated immediately because otherwise they could risk becoming lifelong carriers of the virus.



Aref Bataineh

Dr. Bataineh said the ministry has allocated JD 1 million annually to fight off the disease.

RSS, German ITF to conduct joint studies

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and ITF Intertraffic Germany, a subsidiary of the Daimler Benz Group, Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding on conducting studies aimed at the creation and generation of transportation master plans in Jordan and other countries in the region, within a comprehensive framework that includes the subsectors of land (highways, railways), sea (ports, harbours), and air (airports).

Under the agreement, the RSS will cooperate with the ITF Intertraffic in conducting studies dealing with transport management in urban areas as well as

carrying out pre-feasibility and feasibility studies of proposed solutions to present and envisaged transportation problems.

The signatories also agreed to exchange information in the field of transportation. Furthermore, ITF will provide technical support and training to RSS cadres.

The agreement, valid for four years, was signed by Gerd Bahr, member of the ITF Intertraffic board of management, and RSS Vice President Said Alloush.

Mercedes-Benz, Deutsche Aerospace, Dehis, ITF Intertraffic are subsidiaries of the Daimler Benz Group of Germany.

NRA, U.S. firms to follow up talks on oil deal

AMMAN (J.T.) — Representatives of the American oil company Anadarko are expected in Jordan next week for follow-up talks with the National Resources Authority (NRA) on oil and gas production sharing agreement, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Samih Darwazeh announced Monday.

The Jordan News Agency Petra quoted the minister as saying that representatives of the U.S. Transglobal Oil firm and Malaysian Petronas oil company will be arriving next week in order to resume negotiations with the NRA officials over their oil and gas prospecting in the Kingdom.

Darwazeh said that these companies have analysed geological and geophysical information supplied to them by the NRA, which had conducted wide ranging surveys in search for oil and gas, mainly at the Sarhan and the Dead Sea Districts.

The minister had earlier said that he expected U.S. oil firms to sign oil and gas

concessions and joint ventures covering nearly half of the country.

According to the minister, Transglobal has signed a letter of intent to drill for oil in the Dead Sea area while Anadarko was negotiating for a connection in the northeast.

He said that the National Oil Company, formed last year, will confine its exploration for oil and gas to the Rishah district near the border with Iraq.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral resources Monday announced a one-year tender for trucking crude oil from Iraq to Jordan starting April 1, 1996.

Ministry Secretary General Ahmad Bashir said that the ministry will receive bids for the tender from now and until Feb 7.

Jordan and Iraq last December concluded a deal under which Iraq will supply 4.4 million tonnes of oil to Jordan in 1996. The quantity of crude oil will be 3.2 million tonnes while oil products will be 1.2 million tonnes, according to Mr. Darwazeh.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tax revenue for 1995 reached JD 155m

AMMAN (Petra) — The Income Tax Department (ITD) last year collected JD 155 million in revenues from taxpayers, according to an announcement by department Director General Mansour Haddadin.

RJ reports growth in operations

AMMAN (Petra) — Royal Jordanian (RJ) last year transported 1,281,056 passengers, registering an increase of 5.1 per cent over the number of passengers transported in 1994. An RJ statement said that the airline also last year carried 66,893 tonnes of cargo in and out of Jordan, registering 23.2 per cent increase over 1994's figures. The statement noted that the main increases resulted from operations to Canada, the USA and the Gulf region.

CONCERT

* "Echoes of Arab Music" (involving oud and jawza) on Thursday at Kan Zaman at 8:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "The Development of pre-Islamic Literature" (in Arabic) by Harith Taha Al Rawi at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Contemporary and Traditional Jewellery at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 699141).

* Water colours by Salam Kanaan at Riwaq Al Balqa Gallery, Fuheis (until Jan. 20).

* Paintings by Iraqi artist Hareth Muthanna entitled "Women and Horses" at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Jan. 18). * Water colours by several German artists at 31).

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Colombo proposes devolution to end ethnic war with Tamils

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka released its official devolution proposals for minority Tamils Tuesday calling for an "indissoluble union of regions", with each exercising wide-ranging legislative and executive powers.

The proposals, to be put before a parliamentary select committee on constitutional reforms, is key to the government's plan to end a 12-year war with Tamil separatists who are seeking a homeland in the north and east.

The package proposes changing Sri Lanka from a "unitary state" to a "union of regions" offering wide powers to Tamils, who make up 17 per cent of Sri Lanka's population.

The proposals drew a mixed response when they were unofficially released in August 1995.

The right-wing of the majority Sinhalese community criticised the plan for rewarding terrorism and for giving far too much to the Tamils.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have shunned all invitations to view the package. Moderate Tamil political groups have accepted the proposals but have warned the government not to water them down in reaction to Sinhalese demands.

The package is to be part of a new constitution which will also see the abolition of

the executive presidency, electoral reforms and guarantees of fundamental rights.

Tuesday's proposals remained largely unchanged from the original of five months ago, except for the addition of powers to the centre to dissolve a regional council in an emergency.

They vest in the president the power to dissolve a regional council and assume the functions of the council if the "president is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the regional administration is promoting armed rebellion or insurrection or engaging in an intentional violation of the constitution".

The original proposals vested this power in the council governors.

Analysts see the change as a move by the government to pacify Sinhalese hardliners in a bid to win over their support for the proposals.

"This amendment came about because of agitation from the Sinhalese hardliners," one analyst said. "Particularly the Buddhist clergy thought the centre was giving unlimited power to the regions."

Most Sinhalese are Buddhists and most Tamils are Hindu.

The government earlier this month said it would hold fresh polls in March for two opposition-run provincial councils it dissolved the previous day. It

will be the first test of popularity for President Chandrika Kumaratunga's government since winning power in 1994.

A copy of the package showed the regional and reserved lists of responsibilities remained essentially the same, with national security, foreign affairs, immigration and major ports staying under Colombo's control.

"There are no far reaching changes" from the original proposals, said Dhara Wijayathilake, secretary to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

She said the ministry would explain the proposals in detail next week.

The new document has to pass the select committee by a simple majority before approval by a two-thirds majority in parliament. Then it goes to a referendum.

President Kumaratunga has stressed that her government's intention has been to weaken the LTTE guerrillas militarily to prod them back to the negotiating table.

Last month the government dealt a major blow to the guerrillas when the army captured their northern Jaffna stronghold after a seven-week-long battle.

The government says more than 50,000 people have died in the war, the focus of which has now switched to the east.

China, Japan hold security talks

BEIJING (AFP) — China and Japan wrapped up senior level talks on Asia-Pacific security here Tuesday, with both countries voicing concern over the other's military expansion and opposing views on the U.S. military presence in the region.

The talks began Monday and were presided over by senior officials from the Chinese and Japanese foreign and defence ministries.

"The Chinese side said they were concerned with Japan's military expansion and stressed that Tokyo should strictly adhere to its policy of self defence and not allow its military growth to reach unnecessary limits," a Japanese embassy source said.

"For our part, we made it clear that if China does not want its military modernisation programme to be seen as a threat, it should increase transparency and deepen dialogue with its neighbours," the source said.

According to the International Institute of Strategic Studies, China's actual defence spending is at least four times greater than the official 1995 figure of 63 billion yuan (\$7.5 billion), with most of it hidden in a fog of double talk and creative accountancy.

While welcoming China's publication in November of an unprecedented white paper on arms control, the Japanese side also requested that China "reconsider" its nuclear testing programme.

Tokyo has been one of the severest critics of Beijing's underground nuclear tests, repeatedly threatening to cut government loans in protest.

The embassy source said both sides agreed that the general security situation in the Asia-Pacific region was stable, although

the Japanese officials pointed to potential flashpoints, such as the Korean peninsula.

"We also stressed the importance of a U.S. presence in the region, as well as good cooperation with China, to maintaining regional peace and stability."

The Chinese accepted the historical reasons for the U.S. military presence, but added that they remained opposed to it "in principle," the source said.

The talks were presided over by the director general of the Chinese Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau, Wang Yi, deputy director of the Defence Ministry's Foreign Affairs Bureau, Zhan Maohai, and their respective Japanese counterparts Ryocho Kato and Masahiro Akiyama.

Following their talks Monday, Mr. Kato and Mr. Akiyama held further discussions the next day with Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxian and Deputy Chief of General Staff Xiong Guangkai.

The two-day talks were the third in a series of annual meetings agreed upon between the two governments to increase mutual trust and understanding.

During both sets of the talks, the Chinese officials voiced particular anger over attempts by Western countries to resurrect the cold war-concept of the "China threat," saying such a theory had "no basis in reality."

"Unless attacked, we don't attack," the embassy source quoted one Chinese official as saying.

On bilateral issues, the Chinese delegation asked that Tokyo speed up operations aimed at clearing away thousands of chemical weapons left here by Japanese invaders after World War II.

China plans to cut army by 500,000

BEIJING (R) — China is proposing to cut 500,000 troops from its armed forces, the largest in the world, to focus more funds on economic development now that the cold war is over, sources with military links said Tuesday.

The plan to trim the three-million-strong military needs the approval of Jiang Zemin, chairman of the Central Military Commission and Communist Party chief, said one Chinese source.

The People's Liberation Army faced a proposal to cut its strength by 500,000 to 2.5 million, but no timetable had been agreed, a Western diplomat said.

How the cuts would be distributed among army, navy and air force was also not known.

"The international situation has changed... Our relations with Russia are good," the Chinese source said.

Relations between China and Russia, former Communist enemies who almost went to war during border clashes in 1969, have warmed since then-

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's breakthrough visit to China in 1989. Economic links have grown steadily.

China has also normalised ties with another neighbour, Vietnam, and Hanoi's Communist Party chief Do Muoi visited last December. The two countries fought a brief war in 1979.

The Chinese source said the planned cut would allow China to focus on economic development instead of a costly military build-up.

The streamlining would run in tandem with the military reducing its involvement in running business enterprises, the Western diplomat said.

In exchange, the government would support their budget requests, enabling the armed forces to boost combat effectiveness.

The military has been accused in recent years of joining China's rush to get rich by directing much of its energies into developing businesses instead of training.

China slashed its People's Liberation Army by nearly

25 per cent in the late 1980s — to 3.199 million in 1990 from 4.238 million in 1987.

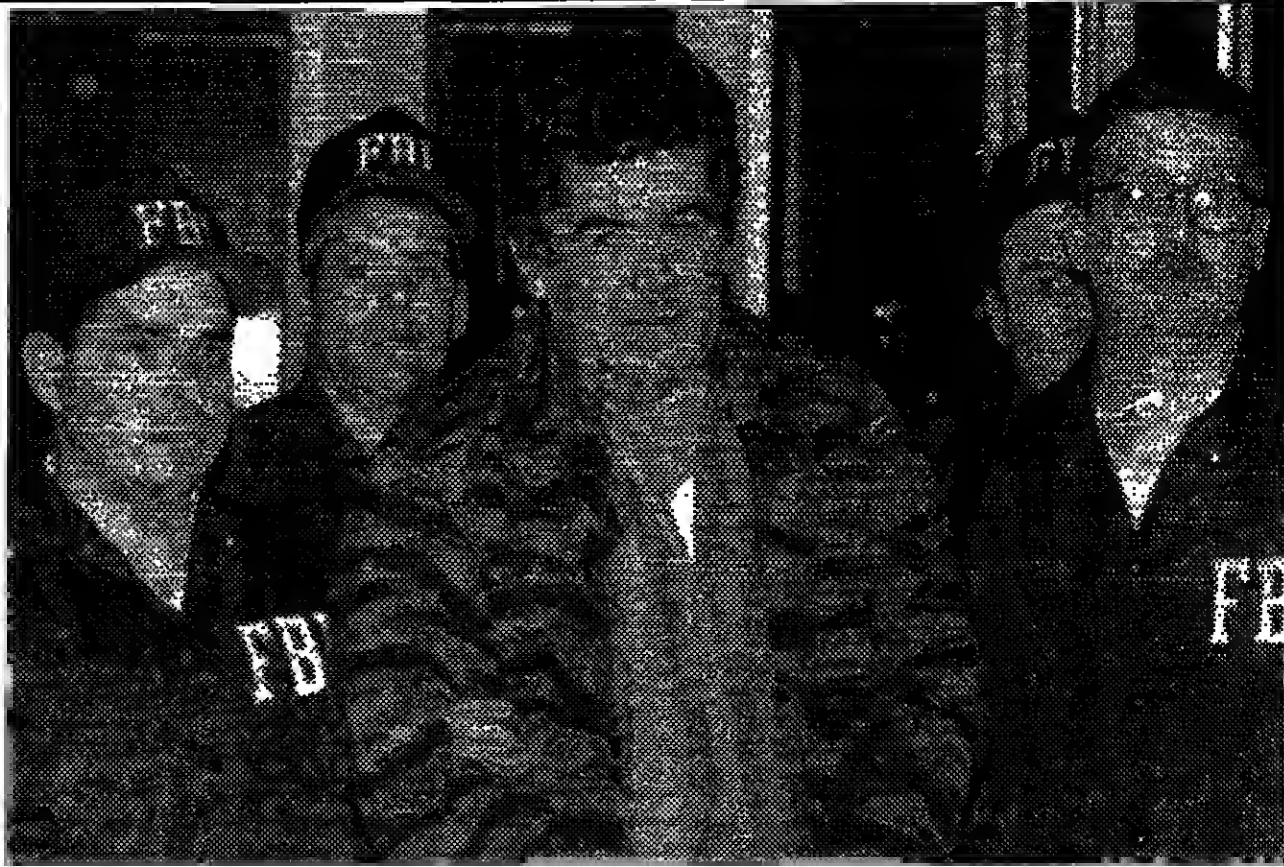
Beijing has slammed the West for portraying it as a military threat to the world.

China has accused proponents of the "China threat theory" of aiming to sow discord between it and its Asian neighbours in the face of Washington's waning influence in the region.

Many Chinese officials feel Washington is trying to contain China by limiting its modernisation through restrictions on technology transfers.

China has defended increases in its military spending, saying a large proportion of the increase went to improving the standard of living of soldiers.

In a white paper issued last November, China said it spent \$6.39 billion on defence in 1994, or just 2.3 per cent of the amount spent by the United States. From 1979 to 1994, defence spending increased 6.22 per cent annually while retail price inflation averaged 7.7 per cent, it said.



Surrounded by FBI agents, cocaine cartel chief Juan Garcia Abrego, 51, (centre) is led out of the Houston office of the FBI after being extradited to the United States earlier in the evening, January 15. Mr. Abrego, one of the world's most wanted drug traffickers, was captured in Mexico (Reuters photo)

Mexican drug lord captured but others take his place

MEXICO CITY (R) — Captured cocaine kingpin Juan Garcia Abrego may be one of the biggest drug barons to fall in Mexico in recent times, but he has already been eclipsed in the drug world by a rival who authorities say poses a far greater danger.

Mr. Garcia Abrego, a 51-year-old American citizen of Mexican extraction, was arrested by a team of 15 Mexican antinarcotics agents Sunday near the northern city of Monterrey and deported amid massive security Monday to Houston for prosecution.

A man accustomed to spending \$50 million a month in bribes and who reputedly only ordered killings on the 17th of each month, the portly, six-foot head of the gulf cocaine cartel was reduced to trying to hurdle fences to escape his captors on Sunday night.

"Seeing himself discovered, Mr. Garcia Abrego tried to run away by jumping over the fences of neighbouring houses," the Mexican attorney general's office said Monday.

Upon his arrest, Mr. Garcia Abrego "showed problems with his blood pressure... A specialised medical team accompanied him on his expulsion flight," the office said. Estimates of the gulf cartel's annual earnings in its prime from smuggling cocaine into the United States range up to \$20 billion a year.

In a netherworld of nicknames and pseudonyms, Mr. Garcia Abrego seemed to have more of those, too, than any other trafficker.

The FBI, in its poster naming him as one of its 10 most wanted fugitives, listed some pseudonyms as the Doll, the Lord, the Engineer, the Director and the Patient One, while Mexican TV Monday added the Man and the Boss.

But Mr. Garcia Abrego had been on the run for months, unable to effectively administer his vast empire in the face of a determined manhunt by authorities. An intermediary had even made overtures to Mexican authorities last year to

negotiate his surrender, officials say.

Mexican Attorney General Antonio Lozano turned Mr. Garcia Abrego down with no promises other than a fair trial, they added.

But Mr. Garcia Abrego's place at the top of the Mexican drugs ladder had already been taken by the Juarez Drug Gang headed by Amado Carrillo Fuentes, 40, alias "the Lord of the Skies", a U.S. official familiar with the drug trade told reporters last August.

"We look at Amado Carrillo's organisation as being the number one Mexican drug trafficking group," the official said. "He moves four times more than other Mexican traffickers. He handles \$60 million in cash the way you and I handle \$5."

According to a Chihuahua state antinarcotics official quoted by El Financiero newspaper, about 30 tonnes of drugs a week cross the border to El Paso in the United States, "...and \$200 million a week comes back. You can buy anything with that."

Mr. Carrillo, whose flashy nickname derives from his use of stripped-down airliners crammed to the roof with cocaine for smuggling purposes, maintains a very low profile in Mexico, sources familiar with his record say.

"He has an outstanding arrest warrant for weapons charges, which down here is like ... spitting on the sidewalk," one source said last year. "He'd be out of jail in three days."

The arrests in the last three years of the heads of the violent Sinaloa drugs cartel and the hunt for the equally bloody Arellano Felix brothers who head the Tijuana drugs gang has led to battles between lesser-known individuals looking to take over their turf, experts say.

"These guys have their day in the sun, then they're caught and someone else steps in to take over," one expert told Reuters recently. "It's the never-ending story."

China decries report of U.S.-led U.N. rights motion

BEIJING (R) — Beijing Tuesday angrily warned that U.S. efforts to seek United Nations condemnation of China over human rights could damage bilateral ties.

"We are firmly opposed to the use of human rights to interfere in a country's domestic politics," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Chen Jian told a news conference.

"We also strongly oppose making use of U.N. organisations and committees to bring up the so-called human rights issue to criticise unwarrantedly other countries," Mr. Chen said.

The official spoke in response to U.S. media reports that the United States would seek a resolution condemning China when the U.N. Human Rights Commission meets in Geneva in March.

China has only narrowly escaped censure at the meeting in the past two years.

Mr. Chen said five years of U.S. efforts to win U.N. condemnation of China's human rights record "have all ended in failure".

He urged the United States to abandon a confrontational approach to human rights "because that policy not only jeopardises cooperation in the field of human rights but also damages the smooth improvement of China-U.S. relations".

Murayama reelected as Socialist leader despite record low turnout

TOKYO (AFP) — Former Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama was easily re-elected Tuesday as leader of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the second largest party in the ruling coalition.

The 71-year-old party chairman beat his only rival, former television commentator Tadatoshi Akiba, by a wide margin of 57,591 votes to 10,490 votes. But turnout among the 111,000 party members registered to vote dropped to a record low of 66.1 per cent, party officials said.

"We will seek to establish in the shortest possible time a new party capable of being part of another government," Mr. Murayama told a news conference.

Mr. Murayama stepped down last week after leading the three-party coalition for more than a year and a half. He was replaced by Deputy Prime Minister and Trade Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who has headed the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the largest party in the coalition, since September.

The former premier has said his "final task" will be to form a new liberal party capable of competing with the LDP and the New Frontier Party, the main opposition party.

The neo-conservative group elected back-room party boss Ichiro Ozawa as its leader in December, replacing former Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu.

Mr. Akiba, a 53-year-old deputy from the left wing of the SDP, had criticised Mr. Murayama for abandoning traditional party policies such as opposing the Japanese mil-

itary and the country's security treaty with the United States.

He has also voiced opposition to Mr. Murayama's efforts to merge the SDP with the New Party Sakigake, the smallest party in the coalition led by former Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura.

Fearing major setbacks at the next general election, Mr. Murayama and Mr. Takemura have reportedly agreed to set up a new party in May. The mass-circulation Yomiuri Shimbun reported Monday that the two parties would shortly set up a consultative body before forming a special council to work out the name, leadership and policies of the new party.

But Finance Minister Wataru Kubo, a senior member of the SDP, denied the report Tuesday. "I don't think there has been such an agreement between the two parties," he was quoted as telling reporters.

Mr. Hashimoto and Mr. Takemura meanwhile congratulated Mr. Murayama on his victory, saying it would help strengthen the three-party coalition. "It's good," the prime minister said. "Since they are moving in a new direction and shedding their old skin, we hope they will succeed in a way that will strengthen the three-party framework."

Mr. Takemura, the New Party Sakigake leader, said: "His reelection at this juncture is desirable since Murayama has the idea of marshalling a wide range of political forces. We will also seek to have serious discussions with them on building a cooperative relationship."

Scientists take deepest peek yet into universe

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (R) — Hubble space telescope scientists said Monday they have discovered hundreds of new galaxies in their deepest peek yet into the universe.

At least 1,500 galaxies at various stages of evolution were revealed in hundreds of pictures of deep space taken by a special camera in December, scientists from NASA's Space Telescope Science Institute in Maryland said.

Most of the galaxies had never before been seen by even the largest telescopes, the scientists reported at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society in San Antonio, Texas.

"In time these Hubble data could turn out to be the double helix of galaxy formation. We are clearly seeing some of the galaxies as they were more than 10 billion years ago, in the process of formation," institute Director Robert Williams said in a statement released to reporters.

The findings were considered significant enough to immediately release to astronomers around the world, the scientists said, with the new data to be used in research into the age and evolution of the universe.

"As the images have come up on our screens, we have not been able to keep from wondering if we might

somehow be seeing our own origins in all of this," said Mr. Williams, who led the deep field project. "The past 10 days have been an unbelievable experience."

After a year of planning, astronomers processed 342 frames photographed between Dec. 18 and Dec. 28 to form a single image of deep space known as the Hubble deep field image.

An infrared camera scheduled to be installed in the Hubble space telescope in 1997 will search for even farther galaxies, the institute reported. The Hubble space telescope is a joint project of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the European Space Agency.

Bombay wedding stays low-key with 10,000 guests

BOMBAY (R) — It was a low-key affair. There were 10,000 guests, the bridegrooms wore silk and rode white horses to the sound of a brass band, elephants led the wedding procession and the invitations were 48-page booklets. India's wealthiest expatriate family, the Hinduja wanted it that way, apparently. Based in London, they have made their fortune in fields as diverse as banking, truck-building and cable television. "For such a wealthy family, the celebrations are quite low-key," said one of the guests. "There's no liquor, and the food is entirely vegetarian." the laws of Bombay's exclusive turf club were turned into a fairyland for the occasion, with huge quantities of dry ice representing waterfalls and ice-capped mountains.

Indian state bans British glamour girl show

NEW DELHI (R) — British pin-up turned singer Samantha Fox has been barred from performing in the Communist-ruled Indian state of West Bengal, the Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported. News reports said the local Communist Party regarded her stage shows as "undignified" and that police feared she might cause crowd problems. Fox, who made her name in Britain as a topless model, planned to sing at a charity concert in Calcutta Saturday. PTI quoted a West Bengal official as saying the government would not now allow the 25-year-old blonde to appear.

Danish Hells Angels open charity shop

COPENHAGEN (R) — An aid organisation for jailed Danish members of the Hells Angels motorcycle gang has opened a fundraising shop in the provincial city of Aalborg, the daily Jyllands-Posten reported. The shop, run by the imprisoned bikers' group defence fund Denmark, sells Hells Angels tee-shirts, sunglasses, lighters and hashish-pipes made by candidates for Hells Angels membership, the paper said. Use of hashish is illegal in Denmark, but police usually ignore possession of small amounts for personal use and there is no ban on the sale of accessories such as pipes and extra-long cigarette papers. Jyllands-Posten said similar shops were planned for Copenhagen and the port of Aarhus.

School covers up nude sculpture

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (AFP) — For teachers, the issue is taste. For a student artist, censorship. From any perspective, however, one very nude, very anatomically correct statue is now hidden under a large tarp. Dillard High School Principal John Kelly ordered a 2.5-metre (eight-foot) statue of a nude male draped and hidden from view following numerous complaints from students and teachers who found the student art project offensive. "It's about censorship," Rebecca Antolak, 16, said, of her statue in the lobby of the school's performing arts building. "My initial idea was not for the focus to be on a penis, but people are ignorant and shallow." Antolak said she had always planned on dressing her work-in-progress, begun several weeks ago, but not any more. "It doesn't fit through any of the doors. It's in the lobby because it's the only place with a ceiling high enough," said Antolak. She added the penis early this week, but Mr. Kelly said the first complaints were received Friday.



President Bill Clinton bows his head as the Rev. Bernice King (center), daughter of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., prays with (left-right) mother Coretta and brothers Martin and Dexter after the wreath laying ceremony at the King crypt in Atlanta. Mr. Clinton participated in the 28th annual King Day services at Ebenezer Baptist Church before the wreath laying ceremony (Reuters photo)

Clinton leads tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.

ATLANTA (R) — President Bill Clinton, leading tributes to Martin Luther King Jr. That ranged from passionate to humorous, said Monday Americans must "go forward" with the slain civil rights leader's bid to end injustice at home and abroad.

Speaking at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Rev. King worshipped as a child and preached as a man, Mr. Clinton said Americans must work to end bigotry and hatred — whether it is in the United States or Bosnia or Northern Ireland.

"The challenge of this time is to go forward together, to go forward together," Mr. Clinton said at the historic black church. "Every single one of us has a role to play."

"We can define ourselves by our hopes and not our fears," he said to conclude a 3-1/2 hour tribute marking Rev. King's birth 67 years ago.

Noting U.S. efforts to bring about peace in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, Mr. Clinton said humanity was harmed when bigotry causes us to "define ourselves in terms of who we are not, instead of who we are."

The programme was crafted to reach out to a broad cross section — from black and white leaders to representatives of the league of Latin American citizens and the Japanese consulate general.

"We are stronger," Mr. Clinton said, "when we live and work together as a community, not as a swarm of isolated individuals or antagonistic groups — that is still the decision for America today."

The service, which included remarks by Coretta Scott

King and several veterans of the Civil Rights Movement, was a mix of powerful emotion and raucous laughter aimed at praising the civil rights leader and reminding the faithful to continue his quest for equality.

Black comedian Dick Gregory shattered the formal atmosphere in the historic church, teasing Mr. Clinton for making House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich "a negro for a day" by making him ride in the back of Air Force One during a trip last year.

Mr. Clinton's face turned a bright red as Gregory said the Republican speaker has had "a bad two months" and told him "it all started off with you when you made him a negro for a day ... You made him sit in the back of the plane and use the back door."

Mr. Gingrich complained that he was not invited to ride in the front of Air Force One during a flight to Israel for the funeral of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and linked the slight to strained relations that led to the first shutdown of the federal government in November.

"Thank God you didn't make him a negro for a month," Gregory said to the laughter of the crowd filling the church. Mr. Clinton was visibly moved when Atlanta Mayor William Campbell touched off several minutes of applause and cheers from the congregation when he said: "Mr. Clinton, stay strong. Tell Mrs. Clinton to stay strong."

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton has come under heated criticism recently because of a congressional probe of the Whitewater affair and an investigation of the firing of White House travel office aides in 1993.

2 North Korean defectors arrive in Seoul from Zambia

SEOUL (AFP) — The wife of a North Korean diplomat arrived in Seoul Tuesday after seeking political asylum in Zambia, followed by a mysterious martial arts instructor, government officials said.

Television showed the Taekwondo teacher Yoo Se-Do, 29, waving at Seoul's Gimpo Airport on arrival from Lusaka via London.

"Thank you all," the bespectacled defector said before being escorted to a safe house for questioning by intelligence officers.

Britain had played a key role in bringing the diplomat's wife to Seoul, newspapers here said.

Mr. Yoo followed Choi Soo-Bong, the 36-year-old wife of a third secretary in the North Korean mission in Lusaka and rumoured to be the daughter-in-law of a high official, who arrived here earlier Tuesday.

Mr. Yoo sought asylum in the South Korean embassy five days after Mrs. Choi defected on Jan. 7, the Foreign Ministry said.

The two were taken together to London Monday

by Zambian bodyguards after U.N. and Zambian officials confirmed their free will to go to Seoul.

But their separate flights were due to concerns that Mr. Yoo might have been posing as a defector to liquidate Mrs. Choi, the ministry officials said here.

"That's why we arranged separate flights for Choi and Yoo," said Kim Myung-Bae, director of the ministry's Africa Department.

North Korea lodged a strong protest over Mrs. Choi's defection but made no mention of Mr. Yoo, identified by Zambian officials as working for a security firm in Lusaka.

State-run KBS Television said Mrs. Choi's defection followed bitter ideological disputes with her husband.

"She had been in trouble for ideological wrangling with the North Korean ambassador," a government source told KBS.

Mrs. Choi, a graduate of the elite Kim Il-Sung University which usually caters to children of top officials, said she was the daughter-in-law of a senior

North Korean Communist Party official, a Foreign Ministry official said.

Newspapers said she was the daughter-in-law of Hyon Chol-Kyu, the senior North Korean official in charge of Hamkyong province, 70th in the North Korean hierarchy.

But confirmation and other details on the background of the two defectors would be released after interrogation, he said.

North Korea charged Mrs. Choi was kidnapped, but Zambian authorities said she "voluntarily and freely" defected on Jan. 7.

Zambian Foreign Minister Christon Tembo said Monday that Mrs. Choi had bruises on her face when she was handed over to the Zambian authorities.

She allegedly had attempted suicide in the week of her defection by taking an overdose of sleeping tablets, Mr. Tembo said, adding her asylum was "voluntary and the question of a kidnapping does not arise."

Mr. Yoo sought asylum in the South Korean mission in Lusaka on Jan. 11, using a

borrowed North Korean diplomatic car, he said.

Yonhap News Agency quoted Foreign Ministry officials as dismissing speculation that the two had extramarital relations because such relations appeared impossible for North Korean diplomats and their dependents, who live together in a diplomatic compound under the close scrutiny of security agents.

North Korea maintains a strong embassy in Zambia, although its presence has been overshadowed by growing economic ties between South Korea and the African nation since diplomatic normalisation in 1990.

Mrs. Choi's case, in which Britain reportedly played a key role, followed a series of defections by low-level North Korean government officials to Seoul.

On Monday, three North Korean loggers had defected to South Korea after escaping from their camp in Siberia, bringing to 44 the tally of Northern lumberjacks who have sought asylum since 1994.

Biographer: Queen Elizabeth was a distant mother

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth was a distant mother to her young children and would spend just two hours a day with them, according to a new biography of the British monarch.

"Motherhood is not the queen's strong suit. She likes getting on with her job and is extremely busy," one friend was quoted as saying in the new book by biographer Sarah Bradford that was serialised in the Times newspaper Tuesday.

Ms. Bradford said Queen Elizabeth fought hard to preserve the privacy of her four children and let her husband, Prince Philip, play the dominant parental role.

The queen was said to spend one hour every morning and another hour in the evening at bedtime with her children. This mirrored her own upbringing by nannies and governesses.

In earlier extracts from the book that is being published next month, Ms. Bradford said Queen Elizabeth's younger sister Princess Margaret became suicidal as her marriage to society photographer Anthony Armstrong-Jones collapsed.

The book also suggested that Prince Philip had been unfaithful, an accusation that has been dismissed by Buckingham Palace as "tired, recycled speculation".

In the latest extract, Prince Philip was painted as a model father with Prince Charles's former nanny Mabel Anderson quoted as saying he was marvellous.

The British have a seemingly insatiable demand for regal trivia which is eagerly fed by tabloid newspapers that have followed every twist and turn in the failed marriages of the younger royals.

Ms. Bradford, allowed access to private royal correspondence as well as courtiers and close friends for her book, says Queen Elizabeth personally feeds her beloved pack of corgi dogs every afternoon at 5 p.m.

She likes her clothes to be comfortable and unfussy. "It's all right for Joan Collins but not for me," she is quoted as saying when confronted with the choice of padded power shoulders on her dresses like the villain of the Hollywood soap Dynasty.

Ms. Bradford said Queen Elizabeth never read a book unless it mirrored her passion for horses.

Asked if she might be interested in visiting a hi-tech plant, Prince Philip is said to have once replied: "Unless it eats grass and farts, she isn't interested."

Mrs. Clinton may testify on Whitewater

WASHINGTON (R) — Hillary Rodham Clinton suggested Monday that she may seek to testify voluntarily to the Senate Whitewater Committee, which is now zeroing in on her personal role in the complex financial affair.

The committee's investigation gained impetus 10 days ago with the discovery in the White House of long-sought records detailing Mrs. Clinton's legal work for an Arkansas financial institution at the centre of the tangled Whitewater web.

At least one committee Republican, Sen. Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina, has called repeatedly for Mrs. Clinton to be summoned to testify, but Chairman Alfonse D'Amato of New York says he has no plans to do so.

Other Republicans have voiced fears her appearance could become a political circus, especially at the start of this presidential election year. It could also present committee members, all male except one, with the problem of balancing aggressive interrogation with respect for her position.

In an interview carried on National Public Radio, Mrs. Clinton gave a carefully hedged answer when asked if she would offer to testify, saying, "it may come to that. I don't know."

Declaring she had repeatedly offered to cooperate, she added that "if there were an opportunity when I thought that the partisanship was not there, when the questions were ones that you could predict — they weren't, you know, just coming out of left field — certainly I'd consider that. I'd consider anything to bring this matter to a close."

Pressed again on the question, she said: "I'm considering everything, including going to the South Pole."

Mrs. Clinton echoed the charge of committee Democrats that the investigation had become a partisan effort. Sen. D'Amato is a campaign manager for Bob Dole, who is expected to win the Republican nomination to take on Democrat Bill Clinton for the presidency. He has said the committee is unlikely to meet its original deadline of the end of February, meaning it

would continue further into the election year.

Mrs. Clinton's role has come under increased scrutiny after discovery of detailed records of her bills in the 1980s to the Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan Association for work she did as a partner at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Madison was headed by James McDougal, who with his wife was the Clintons' partner in a failed investment in an Arkansas vacation development known as Whitewater. One question being investigated is whether any government-insured depositors' money was funnelled into the project.

The committee this week will examine another issue related to the billings, their sudden discovery in the White House by presidential aide Carolyn Huber, who will testify Thursday. The documents had been thought lost or destroyed.

Mrs. Clinton said she did not order removal of any documents and there has been conflicting evidence on whether any removal occurred.

S.Korean paper shows photos of U.S. Korean War veterans alive in North

SEOUL (AFP) — A Seoul newspaper Tuesday published photographs it claimed were of U.S. Korean War veterans still alive in North Korea acting in Nameless Heroes — a recent serial movie.

The pictures were taken from a video tape of the movie which was produced in Pyongyang from 1979 to 1981, the mass circulation Chosun Daily said.

Chosun, in an accompanying story, quoted two unnamed North Korean defectors, one of whom said he had met the American star of the movie in 1991, and another saying he knew of his existence.

The newspaper did not reveal the source of its videotape, nor did it name the purported Americans, one of whom was shown as a gaunt man with spectacles.

On Monday, Chosun had run a front page story saying at least 10 Americans who refused to be repatriated in prisoner exchanges at the end of the 1950-53 war were still alive in the North.

Most were teaching English and married to Koreans, it said.

Authoritative military sources told AFP in Seoul Monday that although there were no known American prisoners of war (POWs) in the North, it was possible Chosun was referring to the "25 to 27" who refused repatriation.

"They would be in their 60s now," the source said, adding that some of the men were known to have died and a few others trickled back to the West in the 1960s and 1970s.

Nameless Heroes was a serial movie, apparently about the war, and the first defector said the American star, who had played a roving American ambassador in the film, had visited his house in Pyongyang in 1989, with some friends.

The American was introduced as "this man is American, and came here during the war."

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Peace train nearing destination

IN THEIR quest for peace on the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli fronts, the leaderships of Syria, Israel and the U.S. have different agendas. The Syrians, expected to be the last to sign peace with the Israelis, want to gain most. First, they want total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights in order to protect its image, both locally and regionally, as the Arab state that upholds Arab principles more than any other Arab country, knowing very well that what is required of them is a full, preferably warm peace with the Jewish state. Knowing also how significant this is to Israel and the U.S., Syria will demand that it be fully rehabilitated in the Western camp and given a greater role in determining the shape of the region. While Syria wants to maintain its presence in Lebanon, it will want to pacify Iran, the second, but minor powerbroker in that country.

The Israeli Labour Party, meanwhile, while realising the importance of peace, especially with Syria, has an election to win. The election is so far slated for October. But the government of Prime Minister Shimon Peres would like to capitalise on the sympathy it got following the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4 and would like to move the polls ahead probably for June.

Procedurally, Mr Peres needs to announce the polls in a few weeks to be able to meet the June deadline. In those few weeks, he needs a breakthrough, probably in the form of some declaration of principles with Syria.

The administration of U.S. President Bill Clinton, meanwhile, would be in the best of shape for the November presidential elections if it could assemble the parties for a grand signing in the White House in November or thereabouts. That is why the Americans talk of peace in 1996, the Israelis wish for a breakthrough in a few weeks and the Syrians talk tough, demanding full withdrawal from the Golan and a "regional" peace.

Each counting down their days towards their aim, the three parties should be able to coordinate their steps, each to serve its own and the others' interests. Perhaps the greatest responsibility falls on the shoulders of the master of ceremonies, the U.S. Last time, the former secretary of state, James Baker, played the game. He managed to put every one on the Madrid train. Will Warren Christopher steer the train to the final station?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COINCIDING with the fifth anniversary of the Gulf, the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) is organising a seminar to assess the consequences of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as well as the situation that still exists in Iraq as a result of the war and the U.N. sanctions, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer in Al Ra'i daily. Huge human and material losses were inflicted on Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq directly, and on other Arab states including Jordan indirectly, as a result of the war, said the writer. While admitting that the invasion of Kuwait was a grave political blunder and an eccentric act, and that the liberation of Kuwait was just, one must not ignore the urgent need for reasserting justice to the Iraqi people who have been suffering as a result of the invasion and the imposition of sanctions which are no more justified, said the writer. Now that the invasion has ended, and the U.N. resolutions have been implemented the ATF should discuss ways for ending the sufferings of the Iraqi people and bringing justice to them as well, he added. He said there was urgent need for establishing justice for all sides because justice will be the most effective reply to eccentric and reckless policies.

IT IS important that people find all their needs of food supplies during the coming month of Ramadan, but it is more important that they buy these supplies at reasonable prices, said Mohammad Daoud, a writer in Al Dustour. The task of making these supplies available and in sufficient quantities lies with the merchants who are keen on making as much profit as they can, but the task of the ministry of supply lies with controlling the greed of these merchants and ensuring that the limited income groups are able to buy their needs not only during Ramadan but also throughout the year, stressed the writer.

Attempting to define government press relationship in the Arab World

By Lami K. Andoni

ARAB JOURNALISTS, who met in Sanaa last week, reached a historic declaration that aim at reinforcing press freedoms in the Arab World and put a halt to all forms of government violations of freedom of expression.

The Sanaa Declaration, drafted by Arab journalists at the end of a seminar sponsored by the United Nations and the U.N. Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), is the first document in the Arab World that seeks to define a new relationship between governments and the press.

The seminar itself, however, was the fourth of a series of regional meetings that covered Latin America, Asia, Africa and finally the Arab World in an effort to arrive at global principles that would guarantee independent and pluralistic media.

The Sanaa Declaration is to be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for ratification as a binding document for Arab governments.

Through extensive discussions representatives of international press organisations and Arab participants gave a critical assessment of Arab governments

restrictions on press freedoms.

The final declaration deplored government restrictions, and harassment of Arab journalists including travel bans, censorship, detention and licensing controls among other measures that were described by the Sanaa document as abusive and "a grave violation of human rights."

But perhaps the key paragraph in the declaration was the one that laid the main principles that define the relationship between the governments and the press.

The crucial paragraph stresses "sound journalistic practices" as a safeguard against government restrictions but also stipulated that disputes involving media professionals should be "tried by civil and not criminal codes and procedures."

The article proved to be one of the most controversial at the meetings of the drafting committee and the final session last Thursday. Initially, Arab, particularly Jordanian journalists, suggested that abiding by professional ethics should be emphasised by the document to safeguard journalists from government intervention.

Representatives of international organisations that

are monitoring press freedoms world-wide argued that committing media professionals to "professional ethics" could be used by governments as a pretext to imposing restrictions and penalties on journalists. Furthermore, press freedom activists fear that governments could take upon themselves the task of defining professional ethics in a manner that would justify their repressive policies.

Professional ethics and standards were of major concern to some Arab journalists who were seeking that the declaration should in the end affect both government policies and professional standards in the Arab World. They argued that in some countries, where democratisation has taken important steps, sensational press was damaging the credibility of the print media and providing governments with the justification to intervene.

The organisations that watch over press freedom, however, advocated the view that freedom of expression and experience, and not restrictions, would eventually guarantee higher professional standards.

What worried the committees that advocate press freedoms the most, according to their representatives, is that, in most cases, gov-

ernments have tried or detained journalists for political reasons that had little to do with professional standards.

Although democratisation in Jordan was welcomed by journalists, some representatives of the press watch groups cited Jordan as a country where most cases pressed against the tabloids were more a result of the newspapers' expression of views that oppose official policies.

But Arab journalists, drafting the final declaration, insisted that professional standards were crucial to the struggle to promote and enforce press freedoms in the Arab World.

The final draft reached drew a delicate red line between the journalists' duty to define and abide by professional standards and the government authority to apply its laws to solve disputes involving the media.

"Sound journalistic practices are the most effective safeguard against government restrictions and pressures by special interest groups. Guidelines for journalistic standards are the concern of the news media professionals. Any attempt to set down standards and guidelines should come from the journalists themselves."

Disputes involving the media and/or media professionals in the exercise of their profession are a matter for the courts to decide, and cases should be tried under civil and not criminal codes and procedures", the declaration said.

When the draft was read at the concluding session for ratification the same paragraph triggered strong protests by journalists who demanded that the first sentence concerning "sound journalistic practices" be deleted. The concern was once again that governments will define "sound journalistic practices" to justify curbs on the press.

A vote to settle differences, that delayed the final session, came out in favour of the draft as is. It was made clear by the drafting committee that the paragraph should be taken and understood as a whole since each sentence is essentially qualified by the following sentence.

The question and the challenge to all journalists regardless of their differences, the participants agreed, is how to practically change the relationship between the Arab governments and the press in a way that promotes an independent media.

By Ali Kassay

Dastardly data

"I AM sorry, Miss, the information which you request is privileged and confidential. It cannot be given to any unauthorised person except against a written request from the institution which he represents and a clearance from the administration." This, or words to that effect, was the answer given to a journalist friend of mine in answer to her inquiry.

At face value, this seems reasonable. After all, every country and institution has confidential information, the publication of which must be subject to certain rules and regulations. Now what was this information requested? Did it relate to secrets of national security? Did it call unwanted attention to the new Jordanian design which will replace the internal combustion engine and put our automotive industry streaks ahead of competition? Or did it concern the latest breakthrough by Jordanian physicists that will revolutionise the steel industry all over the world for the next few centuries? Not quite. Actually, the inquisitive correspondent asked about the number of restaurants in Jordan.

Now let us reflect upon sinister outcome that may have resulted from publishing such data, which was fortunately averted by the strict reticence of the restaurants' association. To my recollection, there has not been, in the history of international relations, a single conflict where a country or paramilitary group targeted another country's restaurants. Catering establishments, worthy as they may be, appear simply to have escaped the attention of military strategists, except in Andorra where the constitution empowers the government, in case of an invasion, to confiscate the equipment of all butchers in the principality for the purpose of national defence. Therefore, the cloak and dagger theory is a non starter.

Could it then be confidentiality? I can fully appreciate that bankers, lawyers, and doctors would be reluctant to divulge the details of their clients; but restaurants belong to a group of enterprises that crave publicity and actually pay money to receive it. Moreover, as Jordan gears itself to develop and upgrade its tourism industry, one would have imagined that a newspaper report on the services available to tourists would be perfectly in order.

Then, could it be simply a case of an employee, too engrossed in the national pastime of gossip during office hours, to refer to a file and look up a figure that he or she was paid to derive and have on tap but did not? Unfortunately, this is not an isolated case. Everyday, everywhere, individuals and institutions seek to hide their incompetence and inaction behind the thin and transparent mask of confidentiality of information, a practice that has the added advantage of boosting their sense of self importance.

As Jordan gears itself to restructure and revitalise its economy, attract foreign investment, and lead into the twenty first century as a dynamic nation, we the people continue to thwart these national ambitions by behaviour like the above. No investor, unless he has taken total leave of his senses, would contemplate sinking his money in a project that has not undergone a thorough market study, which is precluded by the absence of rudimentary information, no matter how innocuous their nature.

Palestinian elections: context and meaning

By Mona Ghali and Hashim Abu Sido

THE PALESTINE National Authority (PNA) intends to respect its Jan. 20 deadline in compliance with bilateral arrangements for an elected Palestinian council. On Nov. 9, the European Union (EU) Electoral Unit coordinating the international observer mission assumed operations. On Nov. 12, 7,000 specially trained Palestinian teachers began registering voters. A week later, a Hebron businessman was the first to declare an intention to run against PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat for the presidency of the council. In late November the election law governing the entire process was endorsed by the Palestinian authority after being the subject of public debate drawn along political, family and religious lines and reflecting other social divisions, including rural versus urban and refugee versus non-refugee.

The significance of these elections should not be lost in the popular rhetoric of institutionalising democracy and the rule of law. Nor should it be dismissed by a misguided claim that Arab political culture precludes the development of a democratic, plural polity. The significance is relative depending on the position from which the elections are approached, whether by the PLO, the political opposition or the international community.

In theory, elections proceed from normal principles of universal human rights, freedom of expression, equality, tolerance and plurality. In practice, however, in the self-rule areas of the West Bank and Gaza, the carriage precedes the horse. This may not be altogether negative. On the one hand, an enfranchised public, having dismantled military occupation, will accept a national authority that could prove to be repressive. On the other hand, such passivity is likely to have a short shelf life. Forthcoming elections may not produce ideal results, but they will certainly nourish expectations and principles of democratic governance which Palestinian society will not let be ignored.

Significance for the PLO

Despite its national credentials, the PLO must legitimise its authority in the West Bank and Gaza.

In order to promulgate a constitution and laws governing the self-rule areas, the PLO must first validate its claim as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people through the ballot box. It can no longer defend this claim by reference to the 1974 Arab summit or by the exchange of letters between the late Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, and Mr. Arafat. Neither the Arafat League nor Israel (the occupying power) is the source of legitimacy for Palestinian territory.

A freely elected Palestinian council will negotiate a permanent settlement on behalf of the Palestinian people whose ambition is to achieve self-determination defined as the establishment of a sovereign state. As such, the council can legitimately claim a popular mandate to negotiate for political recognition of a future sovereign Palestinian state regardless of the dubious economic viability of such an entity or the possibility of whatever political arrangement with Jordan.

For these reasons, PLO negotiators convincingly pressed for elections during the period, countering Israel's preference for elections after the five-year transition period was over. But accommodation to Israeli interests and sensibilities is evident in the terminology of the Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip and in articles governing the council's structure, size, jurisdiction, legislative and executive powers and responsibilities.

The Palestinian opposition and the elections

Under occupation, Palestinian political factions operated with twin leaderships: one in exile, another local. This split had a clear impact on the conduct of these factions after the September 1993 signing of the Declaration of Principles (DoP). The initial split inside Fateh, the largest component of the PLO, was swiftly remedied and Fateh leaders succeeded in maintaining the movement's unity. Among opposition leaders in exile, some chose to remain outside while others opted to return. The act of returning to the area under Palestinian self-rule was itself a concession and therefore whatever disagreements they professed lost significance once they endorsed the status quo and returned.

Similarly, faction leaders operating inside the occupied territories split. Those opposing the DoP splintered off the parent group, often forming micro-factions of marginal political import. Those supportive of the agreement were grafted onto the dominant political group. Two camps were formed: the PNA camp and its supporters, nominally plural in composition but, in practice, synonymous with mainstream Fateh, and the opposition, a loose network of groups, disparate in political purpose and ideological persuasion but sharing a common distrust of the PNA.

The opposition never realistically considered that the PLO would bow to pressure and modify its position at the negotiating table. Instead, its intentions are based on a dispassionate and pragmatic reading of the prevailing balance of power. In consolidating its popularity by establishing "state" institutions and implementing "development" projects, the PLO projects an image that it is the singular agent capable of effecting change. From a position of relative weakness, the opposition's purpose has not been to arrest the negotiation process, rather to secure its survival. Dialogue and reconciliation between Fateh and Hamas in Cairo during November 1995 reflected a modus vivendi based on mutual interest.

The opposition has not been able to play on the PNA's chief vulnerability; namely the absence of a credible vision for a Palestinian entity. Representatives of the PNA urge the public to exercise their right to vote but are more reticent to clarify what the public will be voting for. Political leaders prefer not to publicly disclose the likely future of a Palestinian entity. They are more comfortable with piecemeal information dispensing as a means to incrementally prepare the public for decisions that may disappoint. The opposition, incoherent and indecisive, has wasted time in internal squabbles as to whether to boycott or to participate in the elections. It is lost in a political wilderness, partly as a result of internal schisms but also due to financial constraints.

Formerly financed by the PLO, international NGOs, and other sources, the opposition is now encountering greater difficulties in sustaining popular social service programmes in the West Bank and Gaza. These services and the national liberation struggle were mutually reinforcing. Committees providing health, education, and welfare services constituted an alternative delivery system to the Israeli Civil Administration. But, with the estab-

lishment of Palestinian ministries delivering public services many of these committees become redundant.

In the attendant confusion and uncertainty, an offensive display of self-interest is evident. Persons associated with the PNA as well as the opposition are attempting to secure positions of political influence and wealth as if subconsciously recognising that old-style political factionalism has outlived its usefulness and what remains is to gorge on the carcass. Coopting enfeebled factions into the electoral process serves PLO interest since they no longer pose a threat as the public grows sceptical of their intention or ability to be agents of change.

Aid, society and the citizen

Political relations and regional stability, more than progressive notions of human rights and rule of law, determine the volume of aid and its recipients. External assistance to Palestine is unlikely to be governed by another set of priorities. In October 1993, the international donor community pledged \$2 billion to the PNA to ensure political stability and to support the peace process. An elected council will allow international organisations such as the World Bank and U.N. agencies to continue to coordinate and wherever possible increase aid flows to the Palestinian authority.

Donors are aware of and function within the environment of Palestinian political centralisation while encouraging economic decentralisation. All agree that democratisation is a virtuous goal. Still, the nature of Arab regimes since decolonisation has not been lost on most observers and the discourse on democracy belies a scepticism that Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza will be able to avert the same lamentable destiny. Elections allow donors to eschew culpability for potential misappropriation of funds, corruption, nepotism, or wrongdoing on the part of the council. By the mere fact that the Palestinian authority is elected by popular will and, as such, is an internal affair of the Palestinian people, donors can reinforce such misconduct while simultaneously denying any responsibility.

Elections are necessary but not sufficient to ensure the development of a plural, democratic political system. That public understanding of democracy is elementary is suggested by the results of an opinion poll conducted by a local organisation in May 1995. Asked "What is democracy?", among the top five responses, slightly more than 16 per cent of the 906

Palestinians polled cited freedom of expression; 15.5 per cent, sovereignty of the people; 13.5 per cent, protection of human rights and minority rights; 10.9 per cent, equality under the law; and 9.9 per cent, elections. More telling was the low incidence — only 0.8 per cent — which said democracy comprised more than one of these categories.

While there is a basis for a democratic political culture in the West Bank and Gaza, that basis is narrow. Palestinian society is ordered by the hamula, the extended family, from whom individuals derive a source of identity and support. Political factions formed the vanguard of the national struggle and strived to supplant the traditional basis for identity (tribalism and the hamula) in their endeavour to order social and cultural life. Professional associations, cooperatives, trade unions, clubs, charitable organisations and other forms of associations operating in the occupied territories reproduced political cleavages at the local level.

Under military occupation, elections within these various forms of association reflected national political lines and membership rarely deviated from factional loyalty and identity. Election outcomes were often the result of back-room politicking, lobbying and coalition-building among persons who could guarantee a following. Regardless of their political persuasion, these groups were motivated by and fully absorbed in trying to dismantle the apparatus of military occupation. This transcendent purpose redefined concepts of liberty, democracy, solidarity in unidimensional terms: liberation as freedom from occupation; democracy as the right to self-determination; solidarity as subordinating internal social and political concerns to the national struggle.

Palestinian self-rule requires the formation of a new political consciousness not confined by the old boundaries of the national struggle but based on the community's political and social needs. In the short-term, political parties participating in the first general election will be euphemisms for old-style factionalism expediently repackaged to fit a timetable. But the import of elections sets in motion a process whereby Palestinians shed their dual self-image of victim and warrior to become full citizens. Victims search for a prophet to lead them to the promised land; warriors ward off enemies until the prophet comes. But the citizen is the source of authority rather than the subject of it.

Middle East International

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Dead Sea coast survey reveals ancient antiquities, contemporary goodwill to conserve cultural heritage

By Rami G. Khouri
Special to the Jordan Times

WHEN THE 1994 Jordan-Israel peace accord opened the way for large-scale development along the northeastern shore of the Dead Sea, the Jordanian Department of Antiquities was faced with a rare opportunity: to survey an area that had been untouched by human development for many decades, because it had been closed off as a military area.

Three separate surveys comprising a total of two months' fieldwork in late 1995 have documented yet another new series of important antiquities sites spanning the last 6,000 years of human civilisation. Equally importantly, this effort has confirmed that heritage conservation and modern economic development can coexist very comfortably — if the public sector puts its mind to it and the private sector shows equal goodwill.

The fieldwork has been directed by Khairieh 'Amr of the Department of Antiquities, and has been conducted by a team comprising herself, Khalil Hamdan, Luyah Mobam-madiyeh and Sveed Helms. In an area of nearly 15,000 dunums stretching over 25 kilometres in a north-south direction along the northeast coast of the Dead Sea, from Sweimeh to south of Zara, they documented 45 antiquities sites, a few of which had been previously known.

Master plans changed

The survey has led to several major changes in the master plan for the region being developed by Sigma Engineering Company for the Jordan Valley Authority (Ministry of Water and Irrigation). Dr. 'Amr notes that the concerned government officials and Sigma engineers have been very cooperative, sensitive and patient in this process, and have

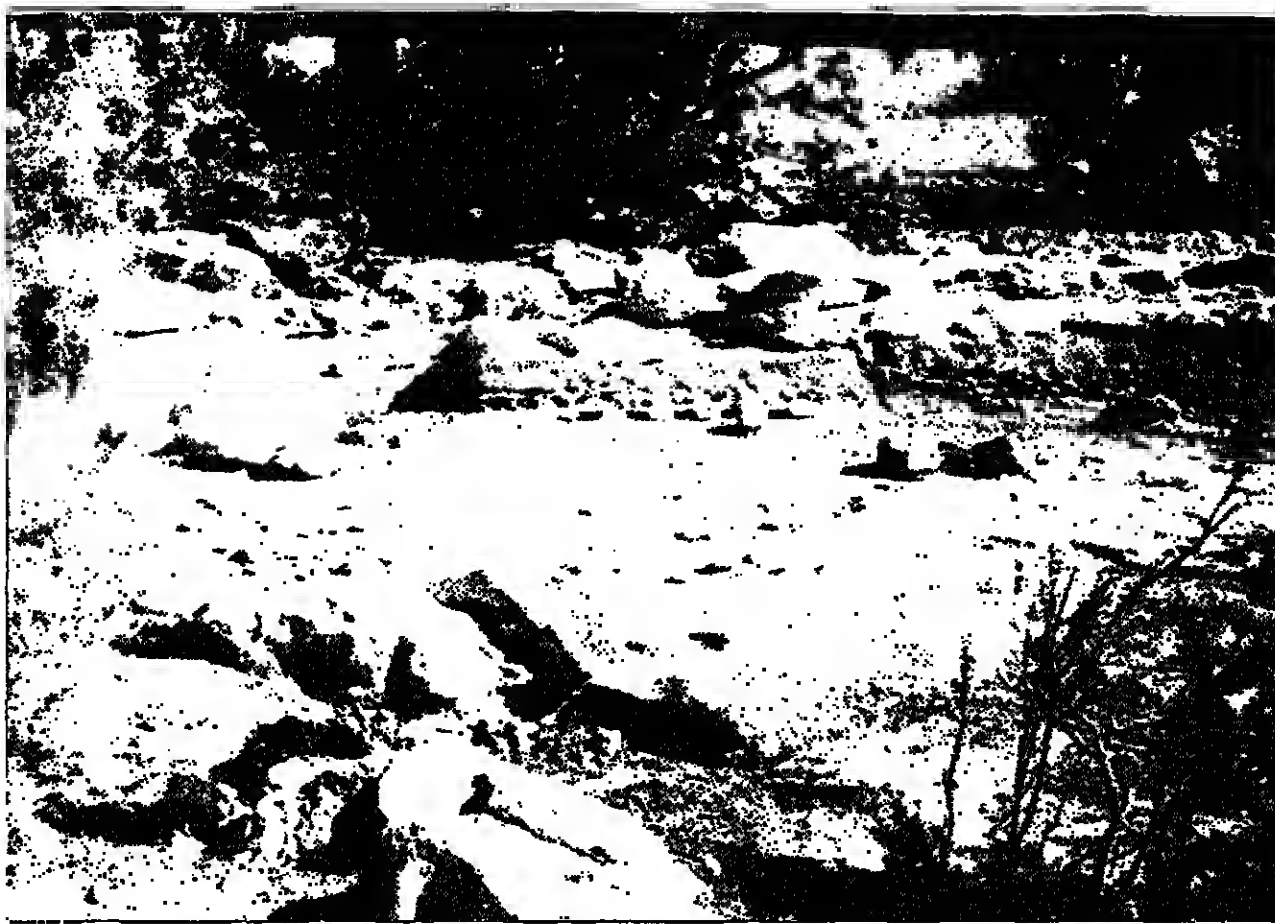
themselves suggested means of protecting sites and incorporating them as archaeological parks in planned urban or touristic developments.

The plans for the Zara area were scrapped and moved further south, after the many antiquities sites were identified by the survey. Most of the land in the Zara area is privately owned, indicating the next challenge of making sure that private development also includes a commitment to protect known antiquities.

Cemeteries were the most common type of site, most of which seem to date from Chalcolithic/Bronze Age or Late Islamic/modern times. They were followed in terms of frequency by relatively modest, isolated farmsteads or hamlets that were often associated with water facilities or agricultural field systems. Several very long walls of indeterminate function were also identified, along with the Roman period harbour at Zara and a large walled site that is probably a Roman period fortification. One of the most significant discoveries was a very large settlement that may date from the Chalcolithic period (4500-3300 BC), when the local culture predominantly comprised open farming settlements.

The variety, number, importance and relatively good state of preservation of the sites indicate how much remains yet to be identified and documented in the Jordanian antiquities sector — and therefore how important it is to conduct this kind of foot survey in areas that are being designated for touristic, urban or agro-industrial development.

In fact, Dr. 'Amr told the Jordan Times in an interview here last week, the number of sites documented probably represents only a fraction of the total ancient remains still buried beneath the ground, for two reasons: first, the walking survey could not



Part of the Roman harbour area (Photos courtesy Dr Khairieh 'Amr/Department of Antiquities)

locate every site merely by visual observation, and second, the rapid rate of deposition of soil in this area quickly covers up surface remains of sites. The survey team members discovered this for themselves several times, when they would document a site one day and several days later they would return to find the site buried beneath soil that had been carried by runoff surface water after a rain. The same thing happened in reverse: They would find no traces of antiquities in an area, but a few days later in the same area they would find structures that had been temporarily buried beneath runoff soil.

Most of the sites were difficult to date because of the lack of pottery evidence on the surface — partly due to the heavy soil deposition rate. Less than 50 sherds with diagnostic dating features were recovered.

Most of the cemeteries in the Sweimeh area are identifiable by surface remains of stone circles or ovals, and seem to date from the Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age period. Some may have been associated with the important nearby Chalcolithic site at Teilat Ghassul. Numerous cemeteries are also known along the Dead Sea coast from the Early Bronze Age. Excavations in the future will determine the exact age of the numerous cemeteries identified.

The Sweimeh area, being very harsh and steep in places, is also significant for its role as a natural sanctuary for local wildlife, including quail, rock pigeons, doves, partridges, other birds and animals that use dens. This highlights the importance of coordination among bodies in Jordan concerned about the protection of

antiquities and nature sites, which has happened in a very promising manner in this case.

The Zara area is the most important in archaeological terms, due to the variety and size of sites there. Most were not disturbed, because the area was off limits to the public for so many years. Only a handful of the graves in the entire area showed signs of being robbed.

Herod's pleasure harbour?

Perhaps the most exciting site for the general public is the harbour at Zara, which would have been built and used in the Roman period, when King Herod had a thermal bath springs complex built at Zara (the baths complex is identified by name — the Thermal Baths of Kallirrhoe — on the Madaba mosaic map, and its remains were partly excavated by a German team in the 1980s).

The remains comprise five or six large walls (1.2 metres wide each) parallel to the shoreline and built of well cut limestone blocks. The harbour remains today measure 150 metres long, but the original harbour was even longer; its north and south ends have been disturbed by modern bulldozing activity. Part of the harbour facilities were cut out of the bedrock, including what appears to be a docking, or anchorage installation.

Some column drums and bases from the harbour are still identifiable on the ground, though some stones have been cemented together due to the action of salt, after they had tumbled into the salty water and remained there for centuries. Other column drums and bases have been identified as decorative elements

in local farms. Because of the evaporation rate and declining level of the Dead Sea, the harbour now sits incongruously on dry ground at 395 metres below sea level, while the water level of the Dead Sea today is at 408 metres below sea level. This is the only known harbour on the Dead Sea.

Another important site discovered near Zara is an enormous rectangular structure whose external walls measure at least 72 x 95 metres, located on a steep hillside overlooking the Dead Sea. A water channel runs near it, parallel to a wadi. This may have been some kind of military installation. The area also includes several smaller structures from the Classical period, probably related to the Herodian baths complex.

The Zara area continued in use during the Byzantine and Islamic eras, judging from building remains associated with pottery sherds from the Late Byzantine through the Umayyad, Abbasid and Fatimid periods (i.e. 6th to 12th centuries AD). Most sites were isolated buildings, probably farmsteads to judge by the many associated terrace walls, field remains and water systems, including channels, cisterns, and parts of a water mill.

A Chalcolithic town?

Perhaps the most important site in archaeological terms (as opposed to the touristic value of the harbour) is an enormous town site with remains of walls, cemeteries, possible aqueducts, and unidentified other structures and complexes. It measures over a kilometre long and up to 800 metres wide. The most frequent pottery from the site is Chalcolithic, but ceramics were also recovered from the Neolithic(?), Roman and Byzantine periods. If this is a large Chalcolithic settlement, it could be one of the most

important of its kind in the entire Middle East, where known Chalcolithic settlements are predominantly smaller, open farming villages like Teilat Ghassul.

An intriguing facility that is not yet well understood is a long, low, simple wall built of piled stones without mortar, which has been identified along a two-kilometre stretch. Above it are the remains of a Roman road that has been identified only along an 85-metre stretch. The long wall is probably an enclosure or demarcation structure, Dr. 'Amr suggests, rather than a defensive wall. It crosses several wadis, but there is no evidence if in antiquity it was carried over the wadis on bridges or arches.

Another important small site is a rectangular structure measuring some 10 x 5 metres, with pottery sherds from the Early and Middle Islamic eras. The Middle Islamic pottery is most significant, because such wares are rarely found in central Jordan; thus this site might provide valuable new information on a period that is not well documented in the Jordanian archaeological record.

The southern end of the surveyed area showed few signs of ancient occupation other than camps, terrace walls, and stone circles that probably mark grave sites. There is some evidence of Natufian or Neolithic occupation associated with wall remains, but this can only be verified by excavations.

This survey has been conducted and funded completely by the Department of Antiquities, with some logistical support from Sygma Engineering Company. One of the intriguing recommendations that the survey team made to the government was to include the excavation, conservation and protection of known sites within the terms of reference of contractors who will provide the basic infrastructure in this area when it is fully developed.

Gore sees Israel-Syria peace

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu held an unscheduled meeting with Mr. Gore late on Monday, a spokesman for Mr. Netanyahu said.

Earlier in the day Mr. Netanyahu, the hardline Likud Party leader known by the nickname "Bibi," had cancelled talks with Mr. Gore after learning he was allotted only 10 minutes.

"Gore approached Bibi during the state dinner at the Knesset (parliament) and apologised. He said he didn't realise that they only had 10 minutes and suggested to meet after the dinner," said Shai Bazak, Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman.

He said the 45-minute meeting, attended by other Likud members and U.S. officials, was held in a friendly atmosphere.

"They discussed what the Likud's position was regarding the Oslo accord and what action the party would take regarding it in the future," Mr. Bazak said.

Mr. Netanyahu has denounced the 1993 Oslo agreement, foundation-stone of the peace between Israel and the PLO, as a sell-out.

Mr. Gore's visit came just two days after Secretary Christopher ended his latest shuttle mission to the region.

Although Mr. Gore will not travel to Syria while in the Middle East, Martin Indyk, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, said the vice president's trip was aimed at promoting the negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Mr. Indyk said Mr. Gore came to the region "to follow up on Secretary Christopher's discussions on the Syrian track."

Iran said meanwhile it can maintain its "good and brotherly" ties with Syria even though it is opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said Iran "did not agree with the negotiations between Syria and the Zionist regime."

But Damascus and Tehran, whose ties he described as "good and brotherly," did not "necessarily have to have identical positions on all political questions," he said at a press conference in Kuwait.

"It is the interest of all countries in the region that good relations between Iran and Syria be maintained," Mr. Velayati added.

The two countries have been anxious to patch over differences which flared when Iran criticised Damascus for reopening negotiations with Israel last month.

Iraq may consider oil plan

(Continued from page 1)

the Iraqi government's fall so it could strengthen its grip on the region's oil wealth, but they were defeated," Salah Al Mokhtar, editor in chief of the official Al Jumhuriyah daily, told AFP.

In Washington, Mr. Bush said he would have preferred to see President Saddam leave the scene after allied forces drove Iraqi troops from Kuwait and fighting stopped on Feb. 28, 1991.

"The ending wasn't quite as clean as it might have been if Saddam Hussein had come to the tent, laid down his thing and maybe left office," Mr. Bush said in a television interview broadcast Tuesday.

After Mr. Bush left office, Mr. Saddam fired a pistol into the air in celebration.

A member of Iraq's governing Baath Party, Saad Kassem Hammoudi, said "Iraq retaliated against the attack by rallying behind its leader."

Saddam Hussein — despite the defection in August of his son-in-law and weapons programme architect Hussein Kamel Hassan — was handed another seven years in power in an Oct. 15 referendum ridiculed as a sham by the west.

But despite defiance, Mr. Saddam is faced with a deepening economic crisis.

Although diplomats said the Iraqi leadership is immune to the effects of the U.N. oil and trade sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait, it has had to take austerity measures to replenish state coffers.

"The war is continuing on the economic front," street vendor Moayyad Judi told AFP.

On Monday the govern-

ment started for the first time to tax farmers for receiving water to irrigate their fields in a six-week programme aimed at raising two million dollars.

Last week it announced a sudden hike in food prices, telephone rates and other services.

For the first time foreign exchange bureaus approved by the state were also allowed this month to buy foreign currency on the black market.

"It's a good step which lifted restrictions on our activities and which has allowed us to open new branches," Abdul Basset Abdul Jabbar, head of an exchange office, said.

Youth Television run by President Saddam's eldest son Uday for the first time reported that a moneychanger would pay the market rate for anyone wanting to repatriate funds held in Jordanian banks.

The embargo deprives Iraq of oil exports, which used to account for nearly 90 per cent of its foreign currency revenues.

Key members of the U.N. Security Council agreed Monday on the need to send a mission to Iraq to evaluate its humanitarian situation.

Western diplomats said. In consultations in New York, representatives of the 15 council member states discussed a draft letter drawn up by this month's council president, Sir John Weston of Britain, based on an idea put forth by France.

The United States, which has taken the toughest line against Iraq, agreed on the text which was to be sent in a few days to Secretary General Ghali, participants said.

Sudanese minister leaves for U.N. with complaints

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudanese Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha has left for New York to complain to the U.N. Security Council about cross-border attacks by neighbouring Ethiopia, a local newspaper reported on Tuesday.

The privately-owned daily Akhbar Al Youm said Mr. Taha was carrying a file full of what it said were Ethiopia's plots and attacks against Sudan.

The Khartoum government last Friday requested an urgent council meeting to look into its complaints that Ethiopian troops had recently attacked Basim area in the town of Gedaref about 70 kilometres north of the border, and shelled other areas with artillery.

Gedaref is one of Sudan's most populous and productive states. Most of the country's staple food sorghum as well as sesame, groundnuts and cotton are grown there.

Ethiopia, which has denied the charges, told the U.N. Security Council on Monday Sudan had accused it of aggression only to divert attention from an Ethiopian request for council action on Khartoum's alleged involvement in an assassination attempt against Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Relations between Khartoum and Addis Ababa hit a low last year after Ethiopia accused Sudan of harbouring the gunmen charged with trying to kill Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in June.

The council was expected to hold closed-door consultations on Tuesday on the Ethiopian request for a meet-

ing. A council source said Mr. Taha was on his way to New York and was expected to meet council members informally Wednesday.

Akhbar Al Youm said Sudan's Ambassador to Ethiopia Osman Al Saeed had handed a letter of protest from Sudanese President Lieutenant General Omar Hasan Al Bashir to Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

Gen. Bashir demanded an immediate withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Sudanese territories and called on Mr. Zenawi to refrain from the use of force in settling regional disputes, the paper said.

Meanwhile, the general mobilisation declared in Gedaref is in full swing.

State Governor Al Sharif Almad Omar Badr said citizens were being trained and armed at the camps of the Popular Defence Force, a paramilitary force formed in November 1989, the government daily Al Sudan Al Hadith said Tuesday.

Mr. Badr said the "new world order" — usually a reference to the United States — had planned the Ethiopian attack as a way to destabilise Sudan through its neighbours. He warned that Gedaref would become "the graveyard of the invaders."

Sudanese television reported that Major General Mohammad Abdalla Oweida, chairman of the security and defence committee in Sudan's appointed parliament, has implicated the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other opposition Sudanese groups in the alleged Ethiopian attacks.

Turkish journalist killed in custody

ISTANBUL (R) — A Turkish minister investigating the death of a left-wing journalist said on Tuesday the 27-year-old reporter died while in police custody.

"What is clear is that Metin (Goktepe) was taken into custody and he was killed in custody," State Minister for Human Rights Adnan Ekmen told a news conference broadcast on the private ATV channel.

Although Mr. Ekmen did not openly say that police had killed Goktepe as human rights monitors and lawyers charge, this was the first official confirmation Goktepe had been in police custody in a sports complex at the time of his death.

"The killing incident took place in the stadium. The stadium was being protected and controlled by the police," Mr. Ekmen said.

Goktepe's body was found on Jan. 8 after witnesses, including journalists from mainstream newspapers, said he was detained by police while covering the funeral of leftist militants killed in a prison riot.

Turkish police have said the journalist was not among the scores of people picked up at the funeral and brought to the Eyup gymnasium — which is within the sports complex — for an identity check.

According to the official autopsy report obtained by Reuters, Goktepe died from a brain haemorrhage caused by blows to the head.

Russians struggle to free hostages

(Continued from page 1)

citing ministry officials. The Russian authorities said some 100 rebels had been killed, but there was no independent confirmation of the casualties.

Meanwhile, Chechen rebel spokesman Movladi Udugov said the bodies of more than 200 Russian soldiers were lying in the streets of Pervomayskaya.

He told Moscow Echo radio that 15 rebels had died and 14 were wounded in the battle.

In Kizilyar alone, 20 people were killed in a day of fighting.

Badruddin Galeev, a Dagestani soldier with the Russian forces outside Pervomayskaya, said the troops had dug trenches 120 metres south of the village which

they were using to target houses still held by the rebels.

FSB chief Mikhail Barsukov briefed President Boris Yeltsin by telephone on the progress of the battle for Pervomayskaya.

Mr. Barsukov and Interior Minister Anatoly Lukin were directing operations near the village.

In the devastated Chechen capital Grozny a new hostage crisis was developing Tuesday after an unidentified group kidnapped up to 40 workers at an electric power plant in the city's suburbs.

The head of the power Groznergo company told AFP some 40 employees, most of them Russians, were kidnapped at dawn. But officials quoted by

Russian news agencies later gave a figure of around 30.

Husseini warns of violence

(Continued from page 1)

joint Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres wished the Palestinians well in Saturday's self-rule elections.

"I hope the elections will go properly and successfully and that as our neighbours, they will enjoy all the advantages of a free democratic society," said the prime minister.

Life-long education needed in globalised world — OECD

PARIS (AFP) — Changes in education policy will be needed to foster a culture of "lifelong learning" required to keep OECD economies competitive in an increasingly information-dominated global world economy, the OECD said Tuesday.

Education ministers of 25-nation Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) began two-days of talks here Tuesday in a bid to lay down a common strategy for joint public and private sector efforts towards this end. Hungary, South Korea, Poland, Russia and the Slovak Republic are attending as observers.

Discussion papers prepared for the meeting say a shift in education and training policies must be part of action to fight the current "unacceptably high" level of unemployment in the OECD area.

OECD officials said a broad consensus has been built over the past few years on the need to provide opportunities, access, as well as encouragement and motivation, for people of all ages to continue learning

throughout their lifetime — from childhood to retirement.

"Low levels of education in the workforce can limit the participation of OECD economies in expanding global markets," according to documentation prepared for the talks.

In addition to the problem's economic dimension, the papers also highlighted its social aspects, pointing out that inadequate skill levels "can threaten social cohesion" in OECD countries.

High jobless rates in the 1990s have indeed caused heightened concerns about future job prospects, marginalisation and "social exclusion," the OECD said.

A new focus for education and training policies would not only contribute to jobs but to culture and democracy as well, and help preserve social cohesion, it said.

In a recent study, OECD experts detected "serious limitations in the literacy skills of a large proportion of the workforce" in several OECD countries.

They said this, together with high jobless rates, made it "urgent" to develop life-

long learning, both on the workplace and in schooling institutions "with close links to the outside world."

The ministers, chaired by Australia's Employment, Education and Planning Minister Simon Crean, will look at how the concept of lifelong learning can be put into practice.

They will discuss ways of ensuring that the extent and quality of pre-primary, primary and secondary education provide a foundation for all citizens to obtain the academic and vocational qualification they need for their work and for continuous learning.

They will take a closer look at how to improve the transition between education and work and higher education, as well as the learning opportunities offered adults at present.

And they will discuss how "all partners" — including governments, employers, trade unions, teachers and trainers, and the learners themselves — could play a role and share responsibilities in creating and financing opportunities for lifelong learning.

The OECD said lifelong learning could produce high individual and social returns "but the financial costs will be substantial too," requiring mobilisation of additional resources.

The ministers would therefore also look at "principles for equitable cost sharing" and incentives for mobilising private sector resources, it said.

Illustrating the scope of the problem, it said provision of early childhood education, considered essential to schooling and lifelong learning, remained "patchy" in most countries.

The rate of drop-outs from upper secondary education remains a problem in all OECD countries.

While enrolment in higher education was growing, although large disparities remained inside the OECD, this raised questions about quality and financing.

And, despite a large demand for adult education, most workers were still not receiving "even a day of employer-sponsored training" per calendar year, the OECD said.

Fariz to follow same policy of Nabulsi

AMMAN (Petra) — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Ziyad Fariz Tuesday said he will follow the same policy charted by his predecessor Mohammad Said Nabulsi to ensure stability of the local currency exchange rate and building up foreign currency reserves.

Speaking at a meeting with president and members of the Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC), Dr. Fariz said the CBJ's credit policy was very flexible and he expressed readiness to meet with representatives of the various trade and industrial sectors.

He called on the commercial sector to play an active role in exporting Jordanian products. ACC President Haidar Murad stressed the importance of ensuring stability of local currency exchange rate, and noted its positive effects in attracting foreign currency and investments. He called for finding a solution to the bouncing check problem, and pledged the chamber's support for the CBJ efforts to ensure the stability of the currency exchange rate and building up foreign currency reserve.

Dr. Fariz also met with Speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, who stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation between the CBJ and the legislative power.

On Monday, Dr. Fariz discussed with brokers at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) the negative impact of high interest rates on the circulation and prices of shares at the AFM.

Dr. Fariz said increasing interest rates aims to serve economic objectives and noted that the industrial sector would not be affected by the rise of interest rate on local currency savings.



U.S. Vice President Al Gore, on a short purchase a lamp made for the upcoming tour of Islamic Cairo Monday, stops at a Muslim feast of Ramadan (Reuters shop in the medieval part of town to photo) (See story on page 9)

Yemenis pay more for gas, electricity in new price hike

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemenis, among the world's poorest people, paid more Tuesday for gasoline, cooking gas and electricity following a new price hike called for by economic reforms.

A litre of gasoline increased 75 per cent from 12 riyals to 21.5 riyals (24 cents to 43 cents) and a bottle of propane gas sold for 250 riyals (\$5) compared to 130 riyals (\$2.6).

A litre of gasoil tripled from three riyals to nine riyals (six cents to 18 cents). Electricity, water and telephone rates have each increased 100 per cent this month.

The price hike, although it was not announced publicly, took effect late Monday after the Yemeni cabinet increased by 20 per cent the salaries of civil servants, an increase retroactive to Jan. 1.

According to Reuters, Yemenis are queuing for bread in the capital Sanaa and other main cities because of shortages of wheat and flour and bakeries are charging five times the normal price.

The official price of a loaf is still one riyal (less than one U.S. cent), but bakeries are selling it for five riyals. Half the capital's bakeries are closed, residents said.

The government has been gradually increasing the prices of basic goods and services since the beginning of the year as part of an economic reform programme agreed with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The reforms are due to be completed over the coming 15 months.

The government has already increased the prices of such items as locally-made cigarettes, international telephone calls, fuel, diesel and kerosene by between eight and 200 per cent.

Economic sources said they expected the official

price of bread to be tripled to three riyals.

They said the government was also expected to increase the official price of subsidised wheat and flour by about 160 per cent to around 850 riyals for a 50 kilogramme sack of wheat from the present 315 riyals and 325 riyals for flour.

Both commodities are in short supply, and the parliament Monday urged the government "to take drastic measures against those responsible for the crisis, being merchants or government employees, regardless of their posts," Sanaa Television said.

Iraq imposes tax on irrigation

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq began to collect tax on irrigation for the first time Monday in the hope of generating \$2 million for the state treasury.

Irrigation Minister Mahmoud Diab said the tax, which will take one and a half months to collect, should raise 6.2 billion dinars (\$2 million on the black market). He told the daily Al Qadisiya newspaper that the money would be used to improve Iraq's irrigation system and maintain water pumps.

Until now Iraqi farmers have been able to use the country's irrigation networks and pumps free of charge.

Now they must pay 1,000 dinars (33 cents) for every 2,500 square metres of cultivated land they own, and half

that rate for uncultivated land.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein announced austerity measures for 1996 in a bid to halt the collapse of the dinar, which has been in free fall since the United Nations imposed economic sanctions on Baghdad after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SOULE

IGNAT

RAZDAH

WHART

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: QUASH BAKED HICCUP UPKEEP
Answer: A bronca rider doesn't get it when he gets it — A QUICK BUCK

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't worry over some anxiety which you can do nothing about otherwise you get very little else completed which is constructive.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Don't air your personal concerns to trends who are hardly in the mood to listen to them at the time or you could cause differences.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be painstaking in handling your duties today but don't expect excepting to go very smoothly for you as you had expected.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You do not want to make some changes which would be detrimental to your progress at this time so do something about it.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Postpone that discussion with the one you love until you have all the facts straight. Don't get involved in a business venture at this time without some assistance.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) This is not a good day today to take a fellow associate to task for something you feel is not being handled in a proper manner.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't make any changes in your environment at this time even though you are tempted to do so you may be upsetting an already good situation.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You may find it difficult to have the good time you had envisioned today, so keep busy at constructive activities which are necessary.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get something pleasant going at home at this time to offset conditions which exist there which you do not much care for.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Control your temper no matter what may arise today which could be disturbing to you. Be most careful if you take a trip with your loved ones.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Plan how to keep your property up without incurring added expenses. This is not a good day today to take risks, especially involving money.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Try not to be too demanding with those who are important in your life today. This is not a good day or evening for social gatherings.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

THE Daily Crossword

by Norman S. Wizer

ACROSS

1 Out of shape

5 Certain conveyance

10 Persian title

14 American playwright

15 Related maternally

16 Wheat

17 Pasture sounds

18 Musical interval

19 Thin Man's dog

20 Margaret

23 Peachy

24 Transactions

25 Instrument

29 Perverse guy

31 Fabulist

32 Rows

34 Magical

37 Peggy

41 Charge for services

42 Author Baldwin

43 Think

44 Record

46 Gaper

47 Boat or table start

50 Spread

52 Meg

59 Type of type: abbr.

60 Chicago airport

61 Slippery

62 Roman statesman

63 Fuel transport

64 Line starter?

65 Was aware

66 Voluminous volumes

67 Wild guess

DOWN

1 Tibetan holy man

2 "— a gal in..."

3 Catty remark

4 Grenada gill

5 "Neither a borrower nor a — be"

6 In readiness

7 Principle

8 Aleutian island

9 Ovan for annealing glass

10 Disgraces

11 Biblical prophet

12 Conductor

13 Is in charge

21 Giraffe's cousin

22 OB's objectives

25 Abuse

26 African river

27 Words of understanding

28 Cruise

29 Gator relative

30 GI hangout

32 Give the eye

33 Wonder

34 Expo

35 Anglo-Saxon laborer

36 Belgian river

38 Fuzz

39 Mother hen, e.g.

40 Auditor, at times

44 Candle makings

45 Irving or Lowell

46 Some are bum

47 Adhere

48 Great achiever

49 Puff up

50 Sacred song

51 "— Grows in Brooklyn"

53 Bottom

54 Akron's stale selection

56 Sure!

57 Vocal ranga

58 Vladivostok veto

Peanuts

Andy Cap

Mutt'n'Jeff

مكتبة القرآن

A review of news from the Arabic press

"But it's a problem to pay back in such short time," added Mr. Mahmoud, who said he was repaying his loan over eight months at an annual interest of around 15 per cent — three times the official inflation rate.

The exchange will have three tiers: An official market for companies over \$3 million capital, a junior mar-

It will operate by a daily fixing on a state-of-the-art computerised system installed by the Paris Bourse with the help of French government funding.

"This will open the way for a lot of institutional investors abroad who are interested in Lebanon but could not invest before because they barred from investing in non-listed companies," Beirut, finance

However, another financier expected trading would be quiet.

He said Beirut interest rates were high, the local financial market was small and thin and currently illiquid and foreign investors were

One U.S. dollar	1.3644/54	Canadian dollar
	1.4562/72	Deutschemarks
	1.6316/26	Dutch guilders
	1.1720/30	Swiss francs
	29.93/97	Belgian francs
	4.9773/23	French francs
	1577.79/2	Italian lire
	105.76/86	Japanese yen
	6.6210/10	Swedish crowns
	6.3850/00	Norwegian crowns
	5.6273/73	Danish crowns
	1.4250/60	Singapore dollars
	0.7430/30	Australian dollars
	7.7318/28	Hoog Kong dollars

Jordan Times
Tel: 684311/
688634

Jordan Times
Tel: 684311/
688634

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3644/54	Canadian dollar
	1.4562/72	Deutschemarks
	1.6316/26	Dutch guilders
	1.1720/30	Swiss francs
	29.93/97	Belgian francs
	4.9773/23	French francs
	1571.7/9.2	Italian lire
	105.76/86	Japanese yen
	6.6210/10	Swedish crowns
	6.3850/00	Norwegian crowns
	5.6273/77	Danish crowns
	1.4250/60	Singapore dollars
	0.7430/35	Australian dollars
	7.7318/28	Hoog Kong dollars

Amra Hotel Shops
6th circle, Amman .

Cypriot Pound	1.4925	1.5625
---------------	--------	--------

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6600	1.6700
Lebanese Lira*	0.044250	0.044660
Saudi Riyal	0.1670	0.1698
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3070	2.3670
Qatari Riyal	0.1932	0.1945
Egyptian Pound	0.2100	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.8350	1.8610
UAE Dirham	0.1922	0.1933
Greek Drachma*	0.2855	0.3085
Cypriot Pound	1.4925	1.5625

Pierce celebrates birthday but eyes Seles

MELBOURNE (Agencies)

Defending Australian Open champion Mary Pierce celebrated her birthday a day late on Tuesday by smashing her way into the second round but she admitted top-seed Monica Seles could eventually ruin the party.

Pierce, who turned 21 on Monday, dispatched Austrian Petra Schwarz in straight sets at Flinders Park but it was world joint number one Seles who was on the title-holder's mind at a post-match news conference.

"It's great she's back and she's playing really well," Pierce said of American Seles, who had earlier extended her perfect Australian Open record with a ruthless first-round win.

Seles, ignoring pain from a lingering groin strain, beat qualifier and compatriot Janet Lee 6-3, 6-0 in a one-sided centre court tussle lasting 46 minutes.

Seles is playing in only her fourth tournament since returning to tennis following a 28-month absence after being stabbed by a crazed fan in Hamburg in April 1993.

Her victory took her record to 22-0 in Melbourne, where she won the last of her eight Grand Slam titles three years ago.

"I think it's really exciting (Seles is back). She is a great player," said Pierce, who beat Schwarz 6-3, 6-1 in a match that at times tilted the Austrian's way but never threatened an upset. Pierce plays Russian Elena Likhovtseva in the next round.

Seles, who faces lowly-ranked Slovak Katarina Studenikova in the second round, said she felt twinges of pain from an injury she sustained on the way to winning the Peters International title in Sydney on Sunday.

"There were a few times when I felt it a little bit but I tried to use a bit of mind over matter out there," said Seles, who shares the number-one ranking with Germany's Steffi Graf. Graf is absent from this tournament because of a foot injury.

Seles said she restricted her movement at time to eliminate the risk of aggravating the muscle strain, adding: "There were a few occasions when I let a ball go rather than lunge at it."

"I still practise wearing some strapping and I am still having treatment twice a day."

After two days, two seeded women's players have succumbed in the first round. American 14th seed Amy Frazier was beaten on Tuesday by Austrian Barbara Schett 4-6, 7-5, 9-7. Twelfth seed Natasha Zvereva of Belarus bowed out on Monday.

World number two Conchita Martinez outclassed Britain's hard-working Clare Wood, clinching the match with an ace to win 6-4, 6-1. Though Wood managed to break Martinez in the second set, the Spaniard never looked troubled.

Fifth-seeded Kimiko Date of Japan and Croatia's Iva Majoli, seeded seven, also had comfortable first-round wins.

Date overwhelmed Mexico's Angelica Gavaldon 6-2, 6-0, while Majoli overcame Russian Elena Makarova 6-4, 6-2.

Date was surprised by the



World No. 1 Monica Seles waves to the centre court crowd after her first round match against Janet Lee of the U.S. at the Australian Open in Melbourne (Reuters photo)

margin of victory in her first game after hurting her hip in the Sydney Tournament last week. "I didn't think it was going to be that easy but it turned out that way," she told reporters.

Meanwhile, Boris Becker came back to defeat bullet-serving Briton Greg Rusedski in a gripping five-set struggle at the Australian Open late Tuesday.

The German fourth seed, fighting to avert a hat-trick of first round crashes at the Australian Open, clawed back to beat 33rd-ranked Rusedski 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 in 169 minutes before a roaring pro-Becker crowd.

Australian Open

Becker came into this testing opening round encounter having been dumped out at the first hurdle in the 1993 Open by Anders Jarryd and last year by Patrick McEnroe — he stayed behind in Europe for the birth of his first child in 1994.

"I feel as if I have broken a jinx here," Becker said afterwards. "After taking control in the first set my mind began to wander and I was actually thinking more about my past experiences here than on the match."

It was Becker's 29th win in five sets and set him up for a second round meeting with 20-year-old Swede Thomas Johansson.

Rusedski lost the opening set, but the power of his left-handed thunderbolts soon became apparent as he pushed Becker into making errors.

Rusedski, who clocked last season's fastest serve at 220 kilometres per hour, fired down a 217kph serve in the second set and another at 213kph in the third set.

Canadian-born Rusedski, who became a British national last June and played for his adopted home at Wimbledon, broke Becker in the eighth game of the second set for 5-3 and then served it out to level a set all.

With this confidence rising, 22-year-old Rusedski crank-

ed up the pressure on Becker and broke the German's

windmill serve with a backhand crosscourt volley at 30-40.

Rusedski's serve was falling away and recharged Becker broke him again in the ninth game for the match.

"I'm pretty pleased with my performance overall," Rusedski said later.

He thought he had a "few chances" particularly in the fourth set when he was serving well, but Becker turned the match around with a high overhead shot.

"He showed why he is a great player... and great players can manage to turn those

matches around," Rusedski said.

After the first round only Dutch 16th seed Paul Haarhuis has been eliminated by Belgian Filip Dewulf in the men's draw.

Top seed Pete Sampras had a convincing straight set victory taking out Australian Richard Fromberg 7-5, 6-3, 6-2.

No. 3 Thomas Muster was untroubled against Frenchman Thierry Guardiola, winning 6-3, 6-3, 6-2, and Swedish seventh seed Thomas Enqvist overcame German Marc Goellner, 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

Former world number one Stefan Edberg, inspired by thousands of emotional supporters, narrowly avoided first-round defeat in a match marking the start of the Swede's final Grand Slam tour.

Edberg, competing in his last open at Flinders Park, drew an over-capacity crowd to the venue's number one court as he fought a sea-sawing five-set duel with Czech Jiri Novak, whose powerful serves and passing shots threatened an upset.

But the crowd, many of them perched on the court's walled perimeter, urged Edberg on, virtually willing him to take the final set and the match 7-6, 7-5, 3-6, 5-7, 6-1 in a completely one-sided show of support.

Wihdat refuse to play against Kfar Kana team

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Israeli-Arab soccer team of Kfar Kana, who arrived here Sunday on a several-day visit, will play against the Kingdom's national junior team on Wednesday making it the first encounter between Jordanian and Israeli soccer teams, the club's chairman Faisal Al Khateeb said.

The team was scheduled to play against Al Wihdat's team, but officials at Al Wihdat cancelled the match, apparently because the visiting club includes Israeli players. Officials at Al Wihdat told the Jordan Times excluding the Israeli players from Kfar Kana is a prerequisite for a soccer match to take place between the two clubs.

"Our team includes Muslim, Christian and Jewish players," said Mr. Khateeb. "We are not ready to eliminate any of our Jewish players in any match with any Jordanian clubs" he added.

The visit by Kfar Kana to Amman was the first visit by Israeli club since the signing of the landmark peace accord between Jordan and Israel in Oct. 26, 1994. The club, which occupies first place in the third division of the Israeli soccer league, was established in 1970. Alongside its Arab and Israeli players it also includes two players from Argentina.

"We are happy to be the first Arab-Israeli club to visit the Kingdom since the signing of the peace accord. We look upon enhancing the cooperation and friendship between Jordan and Israeli-Arab clubs," Mr. Khateeb said in a telephone interview. He added that invitations were extended to Al Wihdat and Al Faisali clubs to visit Israel and to play with Arab clubs there.

Last April, Al Wihdat visited the Palestinian self-rule areas in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and played several matches with Palestinian soccer clubs. They also visited Kfar Kana in Israel but no game was played between the two clubs.

Commenting on the cancellation of the match with Al Wihdat, Mr. Khateeb said that officials at Al Wihdat told him that the team would be busy with their preparations this week for a match in the Premier League.

"We have also been told that due to the preengagement of all stadiums in Amman in the matches of the national league, there would be no chance for arranging any match with any Jordanian team," Mr. Khateeb added.

The Kfar Kana team, which includes 22 football players and about 13 officials, visited Al Faisali Club on Monday and had a joint practice with Al Faisali's players. The officials of the two clubs also discussed means to enhance cooperation between the two clubs.

The match between Kfar Kana and Jordanian national junior team will take place at Petra Stadium on Wednesday afternoon.

Tarnished Ma army prepare for Olympic gold

BEIJING (R) — The latest incarnation of China's once invincible 'Ma family army' of long distance runners has begun high-altitude training in anticipation of running roughshod over the Atlanta Olympic field.

"Our team spirit is high. Watch us tidy up the foreigners at the Atlanta Olympics," coach Ma Junren told the official Fujian daily in an edition seen on Tuesday in Beijing.

Ma was interviewed by the Fujian province daily at the rump Ma family army's 2,180-M (7,150-FT) high-altitude winter training camp at Songmao in southwestern Yunnan Province.

The 40-member team arrived there on Christmas Day after an epic 16-day 4,800-km (3,000-Mi) drive from their bitterly cold home base in northeastern Liaoning Province.

Ma revived some of the mystery that marked his style when he coached Wang Junxia, Qu Yunxia and Liu Dong to dazzling world records in 1993.

This, he said, could result in multiple gold medals for his new squad, which is officially called the Liaoning women's long distance running team despite the addition of men.

Ma confirmed that he was putting the team through intense training races, with daily pre-dawn runs of 26 km (16.1 miles) and 28 km (17.4 miles).

He said he was reviving another mainstay of his old regimen — a news blackout — and declined to discuss his training programme in detail.

The original Ma family army broke up in late 1994 after double world champion Wang Junxia led a mutiny of members who could no longer stand what she called Ma's brutal, unhealthy and often humiliating training regimen.

Wang, the 1993 10,000 metres and marathon world champion who now leads her own team, was beaten in 1995 by Ma Junren's new teenage sensation, Jiang Bo, in the 5,000 metres but has yet to hang up her cleats.

Qu Yunxia, who Ma coached to the 1993 3,000 metres world championship, has stayed loyal to her coach and is training with Jiang Bo and the new Ma family army at Songmao, the paper said.

Ma's army of runners has been practising or doing anything, O'Neal said. "It is still hurting a little bit but again, those guys shot the ball well and we didn't."

Jason Kidd had 20 points, seven rebounds and 14 assists against Orlando's Penny Hardaway in a matchup of two of the NBA's top point

guards. "Anytime you beat the Eastern Conference champions, it's a great thrill," Kidd said. "We executed when we had to. Every time they made a run we answered."

Hardaway finished with 21 points, four rebounds and five assists for the Magic, who have dropped five of their last six road contests.

At Washington, Michael Jordan scored 19 of his 46 points in the fourth quarter as the Chicago Bulls rolled to their eighth straight victory, 116-109 over the Bullets.

Scottie Pippen added 27 points for the Bulls, a league-best 31-3 and 13-3 on the road.

Brent Price had a career-high 30 points and a season-high 13 assists for the Bullets, who had won eight of nine previous home games.

George Mueser added 27 points and 11 rebounds.

At Minnesota, Isiah Rider scored 29 points and Darick Martin added a career-high 20 to lead the Timberwolves to a 103-94 victory over the Sacramento Kings.

The Timberwolves had lost five straight games and four of their last five home contests.

Brian Grant tallied 25 points and Mitch Richmond 21 for Sacramento, which ended its road trip at 1-4.

At Golden State, Gary Payton had 23 points and nine assists and Hersey Hawkins added 22 points as the Seattle SuperSonics pulled out a 104-95 victory over the Warriors.

The SuperSonics have won 10 of their last 12 games and eight of their last 12 road contests.

Latrell Sprewell tallied 26



New York Knicks' forward Anthony Mason (34) tips the ball away from Milwaukee Bucks' forward Terry Cummings (34) in the first half

Olajuwon leads Rockets past Jazz

HOUSTON (R) — Hakeem Olajuwon turned a negative

into a positive and Mario Elie kept a promise to his kids as the Houston Rockets beat the Utah Jazz 107-99 Monday.

Olajuwon scored 16 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter and had all nine points in a 9-4 run that gave Houston an 89-82 lead with 7:30 to play. He added a key three-point play with under a minute left to give the Rockets a 102-97 bulge.

"Hakeem was in foul trouble," Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "Everyone picked it up and both of our point guards played well."

"Hakeem was really great in the fourth. He only played two minutes in the second quarter, but turned a negative into a positive with more energy in the fourth quarter."

Elie had a key play with 14 seconds left and Houston up by three. Karl Malone blocked Olajuwon's shot, but Elie flew in for the loose ball and had a dunk for a 104-99 lead.

"It was a big one, no question," Elie said about his slam. "I told my kids before the game that I was going to dunk on Malone. The ball bounced up and everyone was watching Hakeem. I timed it perfectly, put it back in."

Elie matched a season-high with 20 points. Clyde Drexler added 19 points and 10 rebounds for Houston.

Malone scored 23 points and David Benoit 17 for Utah.

In Dallas, Jim Jackson scored 29 points and George McCloud added 27 as the Mavericks beat the Orlando Magic 119-104, spilling the return of Shaquille O'Neal.

O'Neal, who missed the previous four games with a strained quadriceps, had 33 points and eight rebounds. "I haven't been practising or doing anything," O'Neal said. "It is still hurting a little bit but again, those guys shot the ball well and we didn't."

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RESULTS

Atlanta 96
Milwaukee 98
Chicago 116
Minnesota 103
LA Lakers
Seattle 104 96
New Jersey 108
Dallas 119
Houston 107

Detroit 88
New York 92
Washington 109
Sacramento 94
Miami 88
Golden State 95
Toronto 83
Orlando 104
Utah 99

Tunisia's chances of qualifying take big knock

PORT ELIZABETH (AFP)

Tunisia's chances of qualifying for the quarter-finals of the African Nations Cup took a severe jolt here on Tuesday after they could only draw 1-1 with unfancied Mozambique.

With Ghana and Ivory Coast, two of the strongest teams in the competition, also in Group D, Tunisia might regret their failure to beat the former Portuguese colony.

In just the fifth minute, Mozambique's Manuel Bucane bustled past a defender on the left, cut inside, sold a dummy to defender Ferid Chouchane, and beat keeper Chokri El Ouair.

But Tunisia were rewarded with constant pressure — they could have scored three or four by the break — in the 35th minute.

A Zoubair Beya freekick from the left was floated into the box and Hedi Ben Rekhiss nodded home.

However, the match became scrappy in the second half with few chances for either side, though Tunisia

were mainly on top. And Tunisian players began to show their frustration by feigning injury on several occasions.

El Kass double earns Egypt win

In Johannesburg, Egypt's Ahmed El Kass launched Egypt into second spot in Group A of the African Nations Cup with a 2-1 win over outsiders Angola here on Monday.

The 31-year-old El Kass, Zamalek player hit two goals from the same spot in the 30th and 33rd minutes — one a downward header, the other a shot, but both from crosses from the right from Yasser Radwan.

South Africa top Group A because of their 3-0 win over Cameroon on Saturday, but Ruud Krol's team are now also in the driving seat to qualify for the quarter-finals.

Three-times champions Egypt, always more organised and disciplined than their southern Africa oppo-

nents, did well to hang on to their advantage as lively Angola came more into the match.

But in the 79th minute, Quinzinho latched on to a cross from the right to rifle a half-volley into the roof of the net to give Egypt a scare over the final minutes.

The real test for both sides comes when they meet South Africa — Angola on January 20, and Egypt on January 24, both games in Johannesburg.

Nigeria in Nations Cup blackout: Official national radio and television stations here have clamped a total blackout on the African Nations Cup, after the bolder Nigeria refused to take part.

Since the competition opened on Saturday in South Africa, neither the national radio nor television have reported the matches played so far. No official explanation has so far been offered for the blackout.



Angolan Antonio João Neto (left) tackles Hazem Inam of Egypt during the soccer game of the African Cup of Nations on Monday. Egypt won the game 2-1 (Reuters photo)

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMARA KERSCH
©1994 Toronto News Services Inc.

ANATHEMA — TO WHOM?

Both vulnerable. East deals

NORTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

WEST

EAST

SOUTH

WEST

EAST

trump asked for the minor. The rest of the auction was natural.

The defenders started with three rounds of diamonds, declarer ruffing the third. Since a crossruff would produce only nine tricks, declarer decided to try to set up dummy's hearts. At the fourth trick South led a heart to the ten.

In with the jack of hearts, East had a problem. After a club return, declarer would win, run the queen of spades, then lead a spade to the ten. The king of hearts would be led for a ruffing finesse, and the ace of spades is there as an entry. A heart return would simply be doing declarer's work for him.

Instead, Wiggall returned a diamond, giving declarer a deadly ruff sluff. However, South couldn't afford to ruff in dummy, since there would be no entry to the hearts. So declarer ruffed in hand and led the queen of spades. West ducked, and the spade continuation was won with the ten. Declarer could still ruff out the ace of hearts, but had no way to return to the table to draw the last trump and cash the hearts — down one.

1.50

1st Division Basketball Championship

Jalil, Watani face tough opponents today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Jalil take on titleholders Al Ahli while Al Watani meet Al Orthodoxy when first division basketball championship matches resume Wednesday.

No surprising results are expected in these matches as the form of the five competing teams has become apparent and no change is expected on last year's standings.

Al Jalil will have a hard time against the reigning champions who have a good team waiting to prove they can win their fourth consecutive title even in the absence of star centre Naser Bushnaq who is now playing in Qatar. Al Watani do not stand a chance against the former champions as they seem to have entered the championship without any serious preparation.

Jalil, Orthodoxy score wins

Meanwhile, Al Jalil scored their first win of the competition when they defeated Al Watani 84-57 in a late game Monday evening. Al Jalil won the first half 43-33.

Both Al Jalil and Al Watani seem set to remain in fourth and fifth places and are expected to be playing with indifference knowing that they are not threatened by relegation. The competition's sixth team, Al Abbas, became the only team to be relegated when they pulled out of the championship.

Meanwhile Al Jazireh gave Orthodoxy a hard time before losing by a mere six points 72-66 in their match attended by a good number of fans and officials of the game at the Sports Palace.

Al Orthodoxy were expected to score a big win as they have been preparing for a while and scored victories over teams from Syria and Iraq sending a signal that they were ready to recapture the title they had for decades before losing it to all-time rivals Al Ahli in 1990.

On the other hand, Al Jazireh entered the competition looking relatively out of shape and the team must have been affected by the departure of coach Imad Al Saeed. The coaching post was only recently handed over to Fadi Sabah and the team did not have and serious training matches.

Taking into consideration the vast difference between the two team's preparations Al Orthodoxy were slated to easily overcome their opponents who are represented by their U-22 team.

However, Al Orthodoxy's officials must have been surprised and disappointed when Al Jazireh were about to win the match and maintained a three point difference throughout most of the second half before losing the match.

Al Orthodoxy had the upper hand at the beginning of the match and ended the first half 38-29.

Al Jazireh's Ghaiti Ennabi, Yousef Abu Baker and the team's top scorer of the match Husam Lutfi narrowed the gap to 48-45 in the eighth minute of the second half.

However, Al Orthodoxy captain Hilal Barakat's experience paid off as he scored 7 consecutive points including a three-pointer to again expand his team's lead to 55-45. Al Jazireh again managed to catch up at 55-50 by securing defensive rebounding and two consecutive steals by Munir Barakat cut Al Orthodoxy's lead to 58-56.

After Al Orthodoxy led 61-58 Al Jazireh did not score while Al Orthodoxy netted eight consecutive points mainly by Barakat who nevertheless appeared below his usual form.

Al Orthodoxy took a commanding 69-60 lead which they managed to hold on to despite Al Jazireh's attempts to narrow the gap by a press defence before losing by six points.

In the competition's opening matches Al Ahli beat Al Watani 121-41 (67-23) and Al Jazireh overcame Al Jalil 60-40 (25-23).

Wednesday's matches

Al-Jalil Ahli Court 6 p.m.
Watani-Orthodoxy Sports Palace 6 p.m.

STANDINGS

	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts
Jazireh	2	1	1	126	112	3
Jalil	2	1	1	124	117	3
Ahli	1	1	-	121	41	2
Orthodoxy	1	1	-	72	66	2
Watani	2	-	2	98	205	2

Ginola, Cantona may miss out Euro'96

PARIS (AFP) — Premiership stars David Ginola of Newcastle United and Eric Cantona of Manchester United could find themselves surplus to requirements when France arrive for June's European Championships.

National coach Aimé Jacquet told France Football Magazine's latest edition Monday they were not guaranteed a place in his 20-man squad.

Jacquet said he would not hesitate to leave them out if he felt they would disrupt the team's balance both on and off the field.

Cantona last appeared for France a year ago against Holland, while Ginola has not donned his countrymen's blue shirt since last September's game with Azerbaijan.

Jacquet said he was not ignoring them, explaining:

"We have supervised all Ginola's Cantona's matches" and generally "they are playing well."

But he went on: "It is a squad which is going to Euro 96 and if anyone doesn't want to be part of that group there is no point in their turning up."

"Our success is based on the fact we have all fought for ourselves collectively."

Ardiles to resume coaching career in Japan

LONDON (R) — Ossie Ardiles is adding Japan to his chequered soccer career.

The Argentine said on Tuesday he would take over as coach of J. League club Shimizu S-Pulse next week when he joined his new players for pre-season training in Hong Kong.

"I'm really pleased. I had feelers out for both Japan and the United States but this is much the better option in footballing terms," Ardiles said.

Ardiles was in Argentina when he heard of Shimizu's interest and cut short his stay to come back to England and discuss terms with club representatives.

"I had to fly out to Argentina at short notice on December 31 because my father died. I had not intended coming back until yesterday but I returned last week," he said in a telephone interview from his home north of London.

"I have taken the job for one year, until December," the season starts in March.

Ardiles said that the little he knew about Shimizu was that they finished in fourth place in the J. League last season and had been in the running for the title since the league was created four years ago but had not won it yet.

"The clubs in Japan are all on much the same level both economically and in footballing strength," he said.

Daniele Massaro, veteran Italian former international striker, is one of Shimizu's foreign players.

Ardiles, who helped Argentina win the World Cup in 1978, has played football in England and France as

well as his native country and coached in Mexico.

The 43-year-old Argentine has been sacked by three clubs in a managerial career that began at English second division Swindon in July 1989.

He had 11 months at Newcastle United before being sacked in February 1992. He moved on to west Bromwich Albion.

In June 1993, he took on

what for him was the dream job, manager of Tottenham Hotspur where he spent his best years as a player, an inspiring midfielder who helped Spurs win the English F.A. Cup in 1981.

But the dream turned to nightmare, with Ardiles getting the sack 16 months later, as his attractive, attacking side failed to prosper because of a Steve-like defence.

Premier League enters 18th week today
Top teams expect easy matches this week

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — While the Kingdom's soccer teams get ready for the kick-off of the competition's 18th week Wednesday the game's governing body the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) imposed a series of suspensions barring two players from the rest of the competition's matches.

Al Faisali's players, Mohammad Mahadin, Ali Zu'bi and Jirey Tadoros had displayed unsportsmanlike conduct during their match against Al Wihdat which they lost 1-0. Following the match Tadoros reportedly also attacked the referee.

The JSF suspended Zu'bi and Mahadin for six matches while Tadoros' case was not tackled by the JSF as the attack had not happened during the match.

The top three teams have easy matches as the 18th week kicks-off Wednesday. Leaders Al Ramtha will face last-placed Al Russeifa and are expected to maintain their lead after a possible win.

Titleholders Al Wihdat's win over Al Faisali last week put them in second place before facing lowly Sahab Thursday. Al Wihdat have won five matches and drew only once in the second leg of the competition and are also expected to improve their record.

Al Faisali have another easy match against 11th place Al Jalil.

In other matches, Kufroum, the competition's surprise team now in fourth place, have a chance to strengthen their position when they face 9th placed Al Baqaa.

Al Hussein, who have steadily dropped to sixth after leading the standings in the first round meet Al Qadissieh Friday. 7th and 8th placed Al Jazireh and Al Ahli will each be aiming for a win to keep out of the relegation-threatened last four.

Top Scorers

Al Jalil's Ibrahim Abdul Hadi now leads the top scorers with 12 goals after Al Hussein's Abdullah Shiyab (11 goals) failed to score for the third consecutive week. Al Ahli's Bassam Khatib is third with 10, Al Jazireh's Riyad Azmi is fourth with 9, and Al Ramtha's Mouaffaq Abu Hdeib is fifth with 8.

Schedule of 18th week

Wednesday 17/1	Baqaa-Kufroum
Thursday 18/1	Russeifa-Ramtha
Thursday 18/1	Wihdat-Sahab
Friday 19/1	Hussein-Qadissieh
Friday 19/1	Faisali-Jalil
Friday 19/1	Jazireh-Ahli

STANDINGS BEFORE 18TH WEEK

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Ramtha	17	11	4	2	26	6	37
Wihdat	17	10	5	2	31	15	35
Faisali	17	9	5	3	26	12	32
Kufroum	17	8	7	2	24	14	31
Qadissieh	17	9	3	5	27	16	30
Hussein	17	7	5	5	31	16	26
Jazireh	17	7	5	5	33	22	26
Ahli	17	5	7	5	24	20	22
Baqaa	17	5	3	9	22	39	18
Sahab	17	2	8	7	13	24	14
Jalil	17	2	2	13	20	44	8
Russeifa	17	-	-	17	15	70	-

Asian Squash Championship
Pakistan clinch 8th title
Jordan lose to Malaysia to finish fourth

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Pakistan Tuesday defeated Hong Kong to clinch their 8th consecutive Asian Squash Championship title after scoring an impressive 3/0 victory.

The win continued Pakistan's undisputed domination of the game as they have won all past seven Asian championships.

In an earlier match, Jordan's national team settled for fourth place after losing 2/1 to Malaysia. It was Jordan's second best finish in



the competition. The Kingdom's team had also finished fourth in 1988.

Jordan's only win was scored by Yazeed Adas who beat Yapkok Four 3/0 (9-5, 9-4, 9-2). Kenneth Low beat Mohammad Saeed 3/0 (9-1, 9-0, 9-2), while Ong Beng Hee defeated veteran Hamed Saeed 3/1 (4-9, 9-7, 9-6, 9-4).

India captured fifth place followed by Kuwait in sixth place, Singapore were seventh, Sri Lanka eighth. Bahrain came in ninth and Lebanon 10th, Chinese Taipei 11th, Palestine 12th. South Korea finished last at 13th.

Malaysia had won the women's title Monday after overcoming Hong Kong 2-1.

Singapore took third place after upsetting India while Sri Lanka came in

fifth and Lebanon finished last at sixth.

The tournament's singles crowns went to Pakistan's Mirzaman Gul and Malaysia's Leong Siulynn. Siulynn had dethroned reigning champ Meesba Jhangir of India in the women's final while Gul overcame Abdul Fahim Khan of Hong Kong to win the men's final.

Pakistan's top seed, world champion Jansher Khan had pulled out of the tournament on its second day citing backache.

Five Arab countries were among the 13 teams in the 9-day competition. They represented Malaysia, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Bahrain, Hong Kong, India, South Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Taiwan and Jordan.

Christian Dior's newest perfume now in Amman

Astra For Trading Agencies establishment, the sole agents of Christian Dior products in Jordan Tuesday introduced the Dolce Vita perfume, which is made of Sandal, cedar, Betsuli, lotus and vanilla, in addition to pepper, and shining flowers, peaches and apricots. The perfume bottle is a piece of art which takes the form of an apricot. It has been manufactured in accordance with the traditions of the glass craftsmen in Bouchet and De Corvay laboratories. The name Dolce Vita is a call for joy and happiness... a call for a happy and simple life.

HOTEL
INTER-CONTINENTAL
JORDAN

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The fiesta has been recharged for the New Year. Mama Juanita is now ready to present a number of new Mexican dishes. Another addition to an already colourful menu.

If you are a vegetarian food lover, it is now the time to visit Mama Juanita. You are sure to find a dish to meet your taste.

For reservations, please call 641361 ext. 5

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Wasim Faris (jawza)

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EMBAJADA DE ESPAÑA EN AMMAN

(SECCION CONSULAR)

A LA COLONIA ESPAÑOLA RESIDENTE EN JORDANIA

SOBRE LAS ELECCIONES GENERALES (CONGRESO Y SENADO) Y AUTONOMICAS ANDALUCIA

1. Las listas están expuestas en esta Cancillería por si cualquiera de los inscritos quisiera hacer algún tipo de reclamación sobre errores en la inscripción.
2. Las hojas de inscripción y modificación en el Censo pueden recogerse en la Cancillería de la Embajada de España en Ammán.
3. La inscripción en el Censo es necesaria para poder ejercer el derecho de voto en cualquier elección que se celebre en España.
4. Los sobres conteniendo el voto para las elecciones que se celebrarán en España el día 3.3.96 podrán ser entregados en la Embajada no más tarde del día 25.2.96, si bien sigue existiendo la posibilidad de remitir su voto por correo certificado no más tarde del 2.3.96. En todo caso, si ya están inscritos en el censo, recibirán sus papeletas por correo.
5. Para cualquier consulta rogamos se pongan en contacto con la Embajada de España en los teléfonos 614166 al 614170. Fuera del horario de oficina rogamos llamen al num. 865999 y dejar mensaje por el buscapersonas núm. 18707.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL: 634144
PHILADELPHIA

Pierce Brosnan
as
James Bond 007
in
GOLDENEYE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:05, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

CINEMA TEL: 699238
PLAZA

POCAHONTAS
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5 p.m.
Sylvester Stallone...in
JUDGE DREDD
Shows: 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
* ACE VENTURA "2"
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:30, 10:30
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NATO unable to force Bosnia prisoner issue

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) conceded on Tuesday there was little it could do if Bosnia's formerly warring factions break a key provision of the Dayton peace agreement by failing to release their prisoners of war (PoWs).

Alliance spokesman said they were deeply disappointed at the collapse on Monday of a country-wide prisoner release plan, triggered by the Muslim-led government's refusal to let Serbs go free while thousands of missing Muslims are unaccounted for.

But they acknowledged there were few military measures they could take if one or all the sides miss the Friday deadline for the liberation of captives, as now seems likely.

"Enforcing this will be a difficult thing," said spokesman Brigadier Andrew Cumming. "It's going to have to be done at a diplomatic level. If necessary we will have to go outside (for international help) to get pressure applied."

Brig. Cumming said NATO was worried that political capital was being made out of the prisoner issue.

"We very much hope we are not getting into some kind of brinkmanship that is

playing with the lives of people."

The Bosnian government refused to free several hundred separatist Serbs until Serb leaders provide information on the fate of thousands of men missing after summer battlefield campaigns and says it will stick to its position.

When the Bosnians refused to release their captives separatist Serbs and Bosnian Croats put their prisoners back in jail, even though the Croats had taken their captives to a checkpoint where they were only five metres from freedom.

Bosnian Foreign Minister Mohammad Sacirbey defended his government's stance in Stockholm on Tuesday, saying it had international backing.

"We're not demanding the impossible. We are demanding very much the possible and the moral," he told Reuters. "I don't feel that many in the international community disagree."

The government argues some 24,000 Muslim men are missing, including thousands from the fall of the eastern enclave of Srebrenica in July. However, it is focusing on some 4,000 it claims are alive and in Bosnian Serb prison camps.

The Bosnian Serbs are un-

willing or unable to account for the missing and counter that many Serbs disappeared after the capture of formerly Serb-held land last year.

In Geneva, representatives of some 40 countries attending an international conference on the return of some two million refugees to Bosnia approved a more flexible version of repatriation plans, a U.N. spokesman said.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata said the initial two-year plan would be modified to allow its three phases to overlap.

"We must be at the same time pragmatic and flexible," said Ms. Ogata, who warned the conference that host countries should not press for a hasty repatriation of refugees, warning it could threaten Bosnia's fragile peace.

In Vienna, arms reduction talks involving Bosnia, Croatia and rump Yugoslavia were postponed after Belgrade appealed for more time to draw up its list of weapons and troop numbers as required by the Dayton peace deal.

Negotiations mediated by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) had been due to resume on Tuesday to begin fine-tuning the arms control details of the Dayton accord.



AVIATION ACCORD: Civil Aviation Authority Director-General Ahmad Jweiber (right) and his Israeli counterpart Menachem Shalom on Tuesday exchange the signed copies of a Jordanian-Israeli civil aviation agreement in Tiberias (see story on page one) (photo by Youssef Allan)

NEWS IN BRIEF

American Jews meet Egyptian leader

CAIRO (AFP) — A group of eight American Jewish rabbis met Tuesday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak at the start of a Middle East tour to demonstrate support for the Arab-Israeli peace process. The rabbis also plan to meet representatives of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the hardline movement Hamas. Crown Prince Hassan and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres during the rest of the week. Rabbi Amiel Hirsch, the head of the delegation, said they told Mr. Mubarak: "We represent a liberal American Jewish community. We support the peace. The vast majority of American Jews and world Jews will continue to vocally and strongly support the peace." The Egyptian president, for his part, said the Palestinian issue was the most important to be resolved in the search for a comprehensive peace. The delegation, which includes two women rabbis, will travel on to Jordan on Thursday and to the Palestinian self-ruled territories on Friday, on the eve of historic Palestinian general elections. On Saturday they will round off their tour in Israel, meeting Mr. Peres and right-wing opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu before visiting the tomb of slain Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin. Some far-right American Jews publicly supported Mr. Rabin's confessed killer, Yigal Amir, and collected money for his legal defence.

Iran accuses Taliban of hindering peace

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has accused the Taliban movement of war-mongering and seeking to hinder peace in Afghanistan, a newspaper said here Tuesday. "All the Afghan factions have joined the caravan of peace, but the Taliban militia is not willing to help end the conflict," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Aliakbar Boroujerdi said, quoted by the Iran daily. Mr. Boroujerdi, who is heading his country's latest mediation efforts in neighbouring Afghanistan, said the movement's "recent answer" to Iran "showed that the militia group still seeks to continue the war in Afghanistan." An Iranian peace mission held talks with Taliban officials in the militia-controlled province of Kandahar, in southern Afghanistan, earlier this month as part of efforts to secure peace in the war-torn country. But the fundamentalist group said last week that the talks had failed to improve the uneasy relations between Tehran and the militia because Iran had a "one-sided and partial attitude." Iran has been wary of the Taliban, led by religious students trained in Pakistan Koranic schools, since they burst onto the scene in November 1994.

Opposition to boycott Sudan's elections

CAIRO (AFP) — The Sudanese opposition has decided to boycott the country's legislative and presidential elections expected in March, the umbrella Democratic National Alliance (DNA) said in a statement here Tuesday. The DNA, which groups the Muslim northern opposition and southern Christian rebels, announced its decision at the end of a meeting in the Eritrean capital Asmara. It said it "rejected the sham of the elections which the Sudanese regime plans to hold under a constitution which consecrates dictatorship, repression and terrorism. It is a vain attempt by the regime to redeem its image and legitimise its hold on power." The legislative elections are the first in Sudan since the military seized power in 1989. The government of General Omar al-Bashir has said it hopes the poll will be the key to ending the country's 12-year civil war that erupted when rebels demanded independence from the north in 1983.

Arab Hitler bullied by Israeli soldiers

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Palestinian complained Tuesday that he is constantly picked on by Israeli soldiers at checkpoints when they hear his first name... Hitler. Hitler Abu Hammad, a 21-year-old English literature student, told the Palestinian daily Al Hayat Al Jadid: "I am not ashamed of my first name, which was chosen by my father and registered with the Jordanian authorities. He was a strong admirer of the Führer who he saw as a great patriot, and I respect his convictions. But Israeli soldiers don't feel the same way. Most of the time they insult me and often hit me when they see my identity card." Hitler, who studies at Hebron's Islamic University, is a committed pacifist who will act as a scrutineer during the first Palestinian elections on Saturday. He said his brother does not suffer the same problems at the hands of Israeli soldiers, even though his name is Rommel after Germany's World War II general.

Jewish Agency to attract homosexuals

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The semi-official agency charged with promoting immigration into Israel is launching a campaign to attract Jewish lesbians and homosexuals to the country, an official said Tuesday. Uri Gordon of the Jewish Agency said the organisation was drawing up pamphlets explaining the Rights accorded to homosexual residents in Israel. "We decided on the campaign at the request of Ami Kamah, head of the Israeli Human Rights Association, to help meet the special needs of these potential immigrants," he said. He said Mr. Kamah would provide a list of 60 synagogues around the world used exclusively by homosexuals as the agency can recruit new immigrants at the temples. Under Israel's law, any Jew can immigrate to Israel and gain automatic citizenship. Homosexual rights have been expanded in recent years in Israel, largely due to lobbying by Labour Party Deputy Yael Dayan. The left-wing Meretz party has said it plans to run its first avowedly homosexual candidate in legislative elections scheduled for later this year.

Erbakan rebuffed again, continues coalition quest

ANKARA (AFP) — Welfare leader Necmettin Erbakan saw his pro-Islamic party's hopes of forming a government dwindle further Tuesday following a rebuff by yet another of Turkey's secular parties, but insisted he could still find a coalition partner within the next two days.

Mr. Erbakan, whose party narrowly won legislative elections on Dec. 24, said he believed "a government can be created" despite a rejection received earlier from Deniz Baykal, leader of the social democratic Republican People's Party (CHP).

Mr. Baykal, the outgoing deputy prime minister, said his party had told Mr. Erbakan that the CHP "could not take part in such a coalition." Nor could his party support "any coalition of which welfare forms part."

However, Mr. Erbakan told a news conference he was still confident of being able to form a government.

"The leading authorities of our party will evaluate the talks (with the CHP) tomorrow (Wednesday) and we will make our views public on Thursday," he added.

He admitted, however, that his party was facing up to the possibility of failure.

"We will not hesitate for a moment to abandon our plan to form a government if we see no possibility of doing so."

On Monday, Bulent Ecevit, leader of the Democratic Left Party, also refused to form a coalition with the pro-Islamic party.

Mr. Ecevit's rejection of Welfare came after inconclusive talks at the weekend between Mr. Erbakan and Mesut Yilmaz, leader of the conservative Motherland Party, who nevertheless is the only secular leader who has not absolutely ruled out cooperating with the Islamists.

Earlier in the month the True Path Party, headed by outgoing Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, said it would not join in a coalition with Welfare.

Mr. Erbakan nonetheless said his party was "going to ask for a definitive answer" from the True Path and Motherland parties.

He called on Ms. Ciller and Mr. Yilmaz, their leaders, "not to waste time trying to form a coalition between themselves," insisting that "the people no longer want Ciller as prime minister." He accused the outgoing premier of "trying to hold on to her post."

"If they (True Path and Motherland) had wanted to, they could have formed a coalition before the elections," he said. In his view such a coalition was being sought at the insistence of "interested parties" — a reference to business circles, who have been calling on the two parties to cooperate.

Welfare, he warned, was bound to emerge stronger if it remained in opposition.

Mr. Erbakan's last remaining hopes of forming a government appeared to lie with Mr. Yilmaz, who, while citing "fundamental differences of approach," did not reject further discussions with the pro-Islamic party if his Motherland Party was unable to patch up a new alliance with True Path designed to bar the way to the Islamists.

While the prosecution argues that the actual mastermind is Sheikh Abdul Rahman, 57, the spiritual leader of the Egyptian fundamentalist Muslim group Gamaa Islamiyah, it lacked sufficient evidence to prove this.

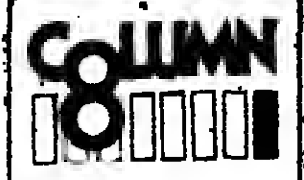
The cleric faces between 30 years and life in prison, as does Al Sayed Nosair, found guilty of the 1990 assassination of extreme right-wing Jewish rabbi Meir Kahane. The other eight defendants may face up to 20 years each.

The defendants were found guilty under the rarely used 1918 Sedition Act of conspiring to carry out a series of bomb attacks in New York, against the United Nations headquarters, bridges, tunnels, government buildings and Jewish businesses.

The prosecution failed to determine the exact role of the group in the United States, how it is financed and whether any foreign countries were linked to the plot.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman also been suspected of planning to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The sheikh was sentenced to seven years hard labour for organising an anti-government demonstration in which a policeman was wounded.

The diabetic, blind cleric is currently being held at a medical prison centre in Springfield, Missouri, where he is being treated for a form of tuberculosis.



'Diana refuses armed bodyguards'

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana has refused to have armed bodyguards despite growing fears over royal stalkers, a leading British tabloid said. The Sun newspaper said she told a friend: "I won't be caged like a bird. I value my freedom too much." Princess Diana, estranged wife of heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles, was quoted by the Sun in its Tuesday edition as saying: "Security threats are something I am prepared to live with. They go with the job. I am determined to lead a normal life." Last week a British court conditionally freed a German doctor who sparked a security scare by turning up outside Princess Diana's London health club to protest about the way she was being treated by Queen Elizabeth. But magistrates warned Klaus Wagner, who regularly follows the princess on public engagements, to stay well clear of the club until he reappeared in court on Feb. 5. In the northwestern city of Liverpool, a man accused of stalking Princess Anne was freed last week after a judge ruled he posed no threat to Queen Elizabeth's only daughter. He is obsessed, having sent her thousands of love letters. Princess Diana refuses to be accompanied by bodyguards except when on official engagements. Recent amateur camera footage captured her sobbing with frustration as she tried to outrun the pack of photographers who continually trail her.

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Sheikh Abdul Rahman also been suspected of planning to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The sheikh was sentenced to seven years hard labour for organising an anti-government demonstration in which a policeman was wounded.

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